

Government cash boost as winter takes its toll on roads

# £260k MORE TO TACKLE POTHOLES

Report by Fiona Smith

**WALSALL Council has been given £260,000 to tackle potholes on the borough's crumbling roads after the harsh winter weather took its toll.**

In total an extra £3 million has been given to councils in the Black Country and Staffordshire by the Department for Transport.

In other areas, Staffordshire has been given £2.2m, Dudley £330,000, Sandwell £310,000 and Wolverhampton £240,000. Birmingham was not given any money.

The cash is on top of £75m in Government funding already given to councils this year, as well as a £46m boost for highways authorities announced just before Christmas.

At that time Walsall was given £115,952 to help tackle some 2,200 potholes.

Announcing the latest windfall, Transport Secretary Chris Grayling said: "We have seen an unusually prolonged spell of freezing weather which has caused damage to our local roads. We are giving councils even more funding to help repair their roads so all road users can enjoy their journeys without having to dodge potholes."

## Prevent

Transport for the West Midlands has also been awarded £1.7m of funding for 'road condition monitoring innovations' to help councils 'more efficiently manage and plan maintenance works'. The idea is to help provide councils with data to enable them to repair potholes before they materialise – helping prevent further potholes and other road defects occurring.

Walsall's Conservative group leader Mike Bird said: "I am grateful for the extra money but more needs to be done – not just in Walsall but across the West Midlands. The Government has got to understand that it is not just the weather which has caused these issues but also the overuse, as the roads in the West Midlands are probably the most heavily used in the UK."

In Staffordshire the county council has already pledged to spend an extra £5m on potholes and preventative treatments this year – on top of the £5m extra it spent last year.

Helen Fisher, cabinet support member for highways and transport, said: "Good roads are important not only for getting us from A to B, but for continuing to grow a strong economy."

## FLYING FLAGS FOR REMEMBRANCE PARADE FUNDS



Back, from left, Sharon Felton and Councillor Rose Burley along with front, from left, Derek Stevenson and Paul Felton at Darlaston Town Hall

AN evening of swing dancing and Frank Sinatra took people back in time to the 1940s to raise money for a remembrance day parade.

Over 250 people attended the event, organised by Rotary Club Darlaston, dressed in tea dresses and suits and danced the night away to songs by 1940s stars such as Billie Holiday and Ella Fitzgerald.

They estimate over £600 had been raised during the event, which was held in Darlaston Town Hall, and all the proceeds will go towards Darlaston Remembers in order to hold a parade this November to mark the cen-

tenary of the end of World War One and pay respects to soldiers who fought in the both World Wars. They are aiming to raise £4,000.

President of the Rotary Club Paul Felton, aged 60, from Essington, said: "We thought it would be a good idea to get the community together to raise money for the important parade where we remember the lost soldiers."

"People have asked us to do another in November. It was nice to see young people from cadets come along to events like that put in the time and effort."

Volunteers from Darlaston All Active,

who lease the town hall off Walsall Council, helped to organise the event while Darlaston Air cadets were on hand to serve rations and support the event. Music was performed by Trixie Bells.

Walsall South MP Valerie Vaz and Deputy Mayor Paul Bott attended alongside the councillors who established Darlaston Remembers, Councillors Angela Underhill, Rose Burley and Keith Chambers. Councillor Burley said: "It was a fantastic evening and thanks must go out to Darlaston Rotary for sponsoring it and organising the whole event."

## COMMUNITY

### Sleeper factory vow by rail boss

A NETWORK Rail boss has vowed to listen to 'core concerns of the community' after residents aired their anger at a public consultation over plans for a railway sleeper factory.

In the second public meeting to discuss plans at Bescot, there were angry scenes during a question and answer session when dozens of residents who will be most impacted by the proposed site grilled representatives from the company about traffic, dust and the site's appearance.

Over 40 residents attended the event which followed the first in January, and Network Rail have since altered the plans to change the access road, including trees and changing the colour of the crane.

The original access to the site was going to be through Tiffany Green estate but a new access road will be created and the Westmore Way entrance will only be used for emergency services.

Campaigner and resident Jenny Lloyd said: "There is very little they can do that will make me happy about the factory behind where my children play."

The site for the factory, which would create 600,000 sleepers a year, is alongside the M6 southbound just south of Junction 9.

Supply Chair Director at Network Rail, Rob Morton, said: "The key thing to reiterate for us today is that we are listening and trying to understand what the core concerns are of the community. We will take those away and build it into our plans."

## SAFETY

### 20mph limit on way for dozens of roads

A SPEED limit of 20mph is poised to be imposed on all roads in part of Great Barr after a series of crashes. A total of 36 people have been injured in crashes in the Newton ward in the last five years a report said.

Council chiefs are now on the verge of bringing in the 20mph limit in a bid to improve road safety across the ward – despite 14 objections.

There have also been problems with 'boy racers' in the ward, according to Councillor Joyce Underhill. She said: "I'm just hoping that there will be enough enforcement of the 20mph limit. It's no good bringing it in if there's no-one to enforce the speed limit."

## INSIDE

### WELL-RED FOR POPPY PROJECT



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# Students use their loaf to help others



Students Cilla Yawa and Niall Jennings

GENEROUS college students rolled up their sleeves to help make sandwiches for homeless people in the city.

The group of 13 Wolverhampton College students visited the Good Shepherd Ministry, where they prepared and dished out piles of sandwiches to people in need.

One of the students said they had chosen to help out at the centre in order to support people in the city who are affected by homelessness and poverty.

The group are studying for a level one diploma in health and social care and pitched in to help out at the Good Shepherd in Darlington Street.

## Support

Student Niall Jennings, aged 16, said: "I have been a voluntary worker at the Good Shepherd Ministry for the past five years and when we were discussing which charity we could support as part of our course."

"I suggested the centre as it

provides a great service to people who are unfortunately affected by poverty and homelessness."

Their visit was arranged as part of a module on healthy lifestyles, which has also seen the students collect tins of food and toiletries to be handed out to those who attend the centre.

The Good Shepherd aims 'to assist the homeless and others in need in Wolverhampton' through practical help including food and toiletries – some of the basic necessities of life.

# We're not dreaming of a white Easter (again!)

THE clocks may have signalled the beginning of British Summer Time but a bleak Easter weekend is forecast with snow on the way for some.

The cold blast will be a stark reminder of five years ago, when Easter fell on the same weekend, and we saw a white blanket cover the area.

2013 was the second coldest March in 100 years, records showed.

The mean temperature was 2.2C (36F) more than 3C colder than the long-term monthly average. It equalled the average temperature in March 1947 with only March 1962 colder at 1.9C (35F).

In the Black Country temperatures plunged to as low as minus 12.5C (9F), and the snow caused Easter events across the county to be cancelled.

There were postcard pictures at beauty spots across the area such as Cannock Chase, Wolverhampton's West Park and the south Staffordshire countryside. Though high snow drifts loomed over many roads including those alongside Pottal Pool Road on the Chase.

From late March to early April in 2013 the country suffered a prolonged spell of freezing temperatures with winds bringing in bitterly cold air from northern Europe and Siberia – just as the UK has experienced so far this year with the 'Beast from the East'.

Up to 20cm of snow fell, especially on higher ground, and there was significant drifting caused by the strong easterly wind. The snow remained on the ground until early April.

White Eastertides have been recorded in 1998, 2008, and 2013.

Though this time the Midlands looks set to escape the worst of the weather we can expect unsettled conditions, blustery and wet days with an unsettled bank holiday weekend. Meteorologist Martin Bowles warned: "We will get colder weather from Wednesday onwards, continuing over the Easter weekend."



A usually bustling Brownhills High Street, is seen completely deserted due to the bad weather in 2013



The snow covered street in Willenhall town centre



Snow drifts off Pottal Pool Road. in March, 2013

# Trusted teen stole £33,000 as treasury clerk at firm

A TEENAGER who systematically stole over £30,000 in less than four months from the family-run firm who gave him a 'great start in life,' has been spared custody.

Todd Brindle was taken on as an apprentice in the credit control department of A.F. Blakemore & Son Ltd in Willenhall in August 2015.

The 19-year-old became a treasury clerk with responsibility for ordering petty cash for other departments. Details of each transaction were meant to be supported by a document approved by two signatories and entered into a ledger but an audit last year discovered the books did not balance, Wolverhampton Crown Court heard. Brindle was asked to make inquiries into the discrepancy and days later admitted to a boss that he had stolen the money.

The defendant was sacked and asked to repay as much of the cash as possible. He quickly transferred £600 to the company but then rang to say he would not be making any further repayment.

A full scale investigation later disclosed Brindle pocketed £33,344 from 31 false petty cash transactions.

Brindle claimed to have squandered the cash gambling and taking drugs, the court was told. Brindle, from Wood End Road, Wednesfield and now working as a driver's mate, admitted fraud by abuse of position and was given 16 months custody suspended for two years with a three month curfew and 180 hours unpaid work.

# Jobseekers get transport boost

WEST Midlands Trains will give job-seekers a helping hand by offering free travel on all its London Northwestern and West Midlands Railway services.

The scheme, due to be introduced by the end of the year, will provide support for university graduates and those who have been unemployed for over six months.

Under the initiative, university graduates or anyone graduating from a higher education equivalent course will be able to claim six free standard return tickets on West Midlands Trains services for travel to and from interviews.

# Ramblers heading to Herefordshire

THE Walsall Group of the Ramblers will be heading to Edwyn Ralph, near Bromyard, in Herefordshire, for an eight-mile circular walk on Sunday.

Non-members are always welcome and can obtain more information from the walk leaders on 01922 691167.

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# Burglar is jailed for power tools break-in

A BURGLAR who was part of a gang that stole power tools from a house after checking the property was empty has been jailed for almost two years.

Robert Pugh, aged 30, called at the three-bedroom house in Willenhall Road, Wolverhampton, on July 27 last year accompanied by a girl and tried the front door, a court heard.

A neighbour saw the pair return with a third person and try the door again but they left and the neighbour did not phone the police, said Mr Geoffrey Dann, prosecuting. However the three had gone round to the rear of the property and climbed a fence into the back garden. CCTV footage showed two of the gang, although not Pugh, force the garage door and steal around £1,000 of items.

They also tried to steal a petrol mower but it was found abandoned, hanging from a tree, Mr Dann told Wolverhampton Crown Court. When the householder returned at 9pm, she was 'upset and angry' to find the garage had been raided.

Defending, Mr David Iles said Pugh admitted being involved but claimed to have left the scene before the other two forced the garage door.

Pugh, of Wellington Road, Bilston, pleaded guilty to burglary and was jailed for 93 weeks. His accomplice, who was seen trying the front door with him, was under 18 and had been dealt with in the youth court.

# £4.4m left for heart research

PEOPLE in the West Midlands left more than £4.4 million in their wills last year to help fund life-saving heart research in the region.

The figure has come from the British Heart Foundation (BHF) which says that more than a quarter of all cardiovascular research in the UK is funded by those who have remembered the BHF with bequests.

Partly thanks to new treatments discovered by the research, the death rate for heart and circulatory disease in the UK has more than halved over the last 50 years, with significant reductions in the West Midlands.

To find out more about the BHF's free will writing service please visit [bhf.org.uk/wills](http://bhf.org.uk/wills) or call 0207 554 0330 or e-mail [legacies@bhf.org.uk](mailto:legacies@bhf.org.uk)

# Plan ahead plea

PATIENTS in the Black Country are being advised to plan ahead for Easter as more pharmacies and GP practices are likely to be shut. Bank holiday opening hours for pharmacies can be found on the NHS website.

# Police chief pledge on station closures



Aldridge station due to shut in 2020

NO police station will close in the West Midlands unless a suitable alternative is available, the region's top officer has vowed. Chief Constable Dave Thompson has mounted a staunch defence of his decision to close 24 stations across the region, including eight in the Black Country.

The controversial move, which was signed off by Police and Crime Commissioner David Jamieson has been blasted by critics.

But Mr Thompson has insisted that neighbourhood policing teams will remain in the communities they serve.

He said that no buildings would close until public engagement had taken place, and the force had identified suitable alternative sites.

"A high number of the poor buildings we intend to dispose of are small neighbourhood stations and this has caused a lot of concern," he said. "Quite rightly, we want neighbourhood teams in their communities. This is why a large part of the estate plan is to look at re-provision of the neighbourhood buildings."

Mr Thompson said the future strategy for the force's buildings had been

driven by the need to scrap buildings that were in poor condition, as well as financial implications. "The need is for buildings that suit modern policing. The force is and will be investing heavily in technology which will create a more mobile organisation."

Under the plans, Bilston's Prouds Lane station will close this summer. Sedgley station in Vicar Street will close the following year while Oldbury, Wednesfield, Aldridge and Tipton will close in 2020. Smethwick will close in 2021 and Wednesbury in 2022.

# Man dies after crash despite medics' efforts

A MAN has died after a crash at a busy junction in Walsall.

Paramedics battled to revive the driver at the scene – a man in his late 50s – after he was said to be in cardiac arrest.

He was taken to Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Birmingham where he died on Monday.

A flurry of 999 calls were made after the incident on Sunday, involving two cars near the junction of Wednesbury Road and Corporation Street in Caldmore on Sunday at 9.45pm.

A wall was destroyed in the crash and was partly cordoned off following the crash.

West Midlands Ambulance Service spokeswoman, Claire Brown, said: "While treating the man, he deteriorated further and suffered a cardiac arrest. The team worked quickly to provide advanced life support to the man and they successfully managed to restart his heart."

However West Midlands Police confirmed that the man died at hospital on Monday morning. The driver of a second car, a woman aged in her 40s, suffered minor arm, back and abdominal injuries.

## Fatality

She was taken to Walsall Manor Hospital for further assessment and treatment. A relative of the victim said that he lived near the scene of the crash, adding: "We are in shock. He was a guy who would never hurt anyone."

Kawsar Miah, who owns the house where the wall was knocked down and lives a few doors down, said: "I instantly thought it must be a fatality."

Sapna Begum, who lives in Wednesbury Road, said: "I immediately just thought something really, really bad has happened. I have never seen or heard anything like it – we were shaken by it. The ambulance crews and police blocked the whole road off. The fire brigade was here too. Everything was covered in bricks. They could not get him out, he was stuck and the car was damaged. They cut the car open. There was debris all over the road."

A police spokeswoman said the circumstances surrounding the crash were being investigated. Anyone with information can call police on 101, quoting log 2522 of March 25.



The aftermath of the crash at the junction of Wednesbury Road and Corporation Street in Caldmore

# Cracking on with Easter fun at Wilko store

THIS Easter, team members from a Bloxwich store are hopping to it, raising funds for three great causes during a fun-filled day of Easter activities.

The exciting fundraising activity will launch Wilko's new brand-wide 'Together for Families' programme, partnering with Alzheimer's Society, Save the Chil-

dren and Teenage Cancer Trust, in a bid to raise an impressive £5 million in three years.

From 10am, tomorrow, Friday, the team will be joined by the Easter Bunny and are inviting locals to join them for some family fun. Customers can take part in an Easter coffee morning, cake sale and face painting, as well as the

chance to enter a raffle bursting with Easter treats, in exchange for a small donation.

The Easter coffee morning will run from 10am to 2pm and everyone is invited to take part in the in-store activities. Children can get custom face painting from 12pm until 2pm and the Easter raffle draw will take place at 5pm.

## NEWS IN BRIEF

## Historic house to become flats

AN historic building in Walsall town centre will be converted into 35 apartments after plans were approved.

The Grade II-listed Globe House building is the former home of the Institute of Science and Art.

Walsall Council's planning committee delegated the application to the head of planning, engineering and transportation to accept it subject to conditions in January.

Now, the application has been approved and work is expected to begin in the near future. The Bradford Place building, which overlooks the town Cenotaph, is a three-storey Victorian premises, built in 1888.

## Thieves raided parked up lorry

A LORRY was raided by thieves while it was left parked up overnight.

Police are investigating the theft from a HGV that was in Longmore Avenue, in Bentley, on March 15. Reports suggest more than £70,000 worth of equipment was stolen from the trailer. The driver also woke up feeling dizzy and sick, fearing he had been gassed, following the raid.

Officers have conducted CCTV enquiries and investigations remain on-going. Anyone with information is asked to call police on 101, quoting incident 20WS/58590T/18.

## Register now to get chance to vote

WALSALL Council is urging residents who have not registered to vote to make sure they do so by the deadline on April 17 at midnight.

Poll cards have started to be hand-delivered.

Dr Helen Paterson, Electoral Registration Officer for Walsall said: "Time is running out to make sure you can take part in the local elections. These elections are an opportunity to make your voice heard and have a say on who represents you."

Applications can be made online at [gov.uk/register-to-vote](http://gov.uk/register-to-vote).

## Lambs stolen and two dead at farm

EIGHT lambs were stolen and another two found dead at a countryside farm. Thieves stole the animals from a farm in Penkridge.

Two other lambs were found dead an adult was injured. It happened overnight between last Friday and Saturday. Anyone with any information should call 101 and quote log number 66 of March 24. PCSO Louise Jones said: "If you suspect livestock is being stolen, please call 999."

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## COUNTY NEWS

### Landlords put off by stamp fee bid

THE change in stamp duty has put the majority of landlords off investing in further rental property, according to the Residential Landlords Association.

It says the additional three per cent on buy-to-let homes has seen 69 per cent of landlords deterred from fresh investment.

Jonathon Ivory, managing director of Atlas Residential, said: "Just as the UK needs more rental homes than ever before, the stamp duty change has significantly dented investors' interest in providing those homes."

"Thankfully, the build-to-rent sector is growing rapidly."

### Redrow urges pay hike for trainees

HOUSEBUILDER Redrow in the Midlands is calling for higher wages for apprentices and a complete rethink in the way they are taught English and maths.

The firm wants increased apprentice pay rates, saying that low wages are putting young people off schemes. In addition, Redrow's new report Building Better Apprenticeships found that one in 10 parents in the Midlands say loss of family benefits when their child starts is a problem.

Also, maths and English tuition as part of an apprenticeship is "not fit for purpose" says Redrow, and is too theoretical according to education experts.

### Cheers! As firms brew up bronze

BREWERIES in Brownhills, Bewdley and Stone took bronze medals at an awards. Judging took place at the Beer X event in Liverpool.

Backyard Brewhouse, Brownhills, was third in the cask premium bitter and pale ale category with its 4.45 per cent Gold. Bewdley Brewery took bronze with 3.6 per cent Worcestershire Way in the keg category and Stone's Limestone Brewery did the same with Cherry Stone, a 5.2 per cent beer, in the small pack section.

### Call first, message to people with bugs

THE West Midlands branch of Public Health England is urging people to support their local NHS by calling before visiting health services if they are ill with a stomach bug.

The request comes after significantly higher levels of stomach bugs, including norovirus, have been recorded in the region. Dr Helen Carter said: "People feeling unwell can call their GP or NHS111 for advice."

# Potholes cause drivers £100m damage

DAMAGE caused by potholes has cost drivers in the West Midlands more than £100 million this past year, with recent cold weather only making the problem worse.

Only drivers in London and the South West had to fork out more than those in the West Midlands, with London being hit the hardest with a damage cost of about £170m.

Drivers in Wales only had to pay about £25m, the lowest out of all 11 UK regions studied.

A study led by vehicle repair com-

pany Kwik Fit found that during the last year, potholes had caused damage to vehicles costing a total of £915 million to repair across the nation.

This is an increase of 34 per cent on the figure of £684m two years ago.

#### Impacts

Communications director at Kwik Fit Roger Griggs said the poor condition of the roads was hitting motorists' wallets ever harder.

He said: "Unfortunately, experience of past years has shown us that the re-

cent cold weather will only make the problem worse and we are likely to see even more drivers suffering serious damage from impacts with potholes.

"It's important to note that while sometimes a pothole will cause a blow out to a tyre, in many cases the damage is not immediately obvious.

"Often a pothole can cause a slow puncture, bulge on the inside tyre wall or hairline crack in the wheel rim which only becomes evident days after the impact."

About 70 per cent of drivers said

they had hit at least one pothole a week during the last 12 months, with a quarter hitting one every single day. Drivers give a combination of factors as the reasons for hitting potholes.

A total of 88 per cent gave the reason as road or weather conditions, such as the pothole being hidden by a puddle or it being too dark to spot, but many also said they had to make a deliberate decision to hit the pothole as avoiding it would have compromised their own safety, and that of other road users.

# Taking the Poppy Road to remember heroes

Report by Charlotte Callear

### A TOWN is hoping to create a 'Poppy Road' to mark the end of the First World War.

Aldridge residents want to adorn Station Road with 10,000 poppies and silhouettes of soldiers to commemorate the 40 men who lived on the road and fought in the Great War.

The poppies and silhouettes will be on display from November 1 to 11. Aldridge Great War Project, Aldridge Local History Society and residents of Station Road, are working with other local groups, businesses and schools for the project.

Residents and different groups have been busy making poppies since October and one knitter, Jan Headland, aged 73, has made more than 250. She estimates each of the flowers take an hour to knit and she makes around five a day.

#### History

She said: "I will sit there and knit while I watch the telly. I have been knitting all my life so I do not have to look while I knit. The only time I put it down is when the football is on.

"It is important because people forget too easily. We have schools taking part so it will bring history alive for the children. The project is based around these men who lived in Aldridge and worked in Aldridge.

"I always felt history was dry when I was at school but it was only when I left that I started to read and I realised these are real lives." It is the first year this has been attempted and it comes as this year marks the centenary of the end of the First World War.

There is a call for poppies to be knitted or crocheted and completed ones can then be handed into Aldridge Library in Rookery Lane or Lynda's Pets



Jan Headland, left, who has knitted 250 poppies to help turn Station Road into Poppy Road, with Karen Ross

and Plants on Walsall Wood Road. Sue Satterthwaite, chairman of the Aldridge Great War Project, said: "Station Road, more than any other road in Aldridge, represents the part that local people played in the First World War.

Not only did 40 men from the road serve, but it was from the railway station that many more travelled to and from war. Also of course it was from the station that patients arrived to be

treated at our two military hospitals in Aldridge. "For all of these reasons, there could be no more fitting place to commemorate the end of the war than in Station Road.

"100 years on local people have an opportunity to play their part in the commemorations of this terrible war, to make Poppy Road a fitting tribute."

The first Poppy Knit Saturday will take place on April 7th from 10am

until 12pm at Aldridge Methodist Church. A demonstration on how to make poppies from plastic bottles will be held on the same day at Aldridge Library.

Anyone wishing to make poppies or to find out more about the project visit the Facebook page Poppy Road Project 2018 or contact Andrew Wood of Aldridge local History Society at Aldridgelhs@gmail.com or telephone 01922 457227.

# Business praised for 'exciting' progress

"IT'S been a very exciting year for the Black Country" - and things are only going to get better.

These were the words of the Black Country LEP chairman Stewart Towse as he addressed more than 100 business professionals at the group's annual general meeting.

Running through highlights from the year, he praised the LEP for breaking their record of number of new businesses started since 2004, with 37,490 firms launched - a jump of 2,500 from last year. He also mentioned the upcoming Commonwealth Games to be held in Birmingham in 2022, which would significantly boost tourism in the area, and the new Aquatic Centre in Smethwick.

Mr Towse said: "The number of jobs in the Black Country is also at 446,500 - a growth of 14,000 since 2012. Black Country LEP is also in second place after London for number of new businesses to reach £1 million turnover from 2010 to 2016.

"It's all been very exciting. Our growth rates are outstripping national averages."

More good news from the region included wages being up across the Black Country and the number of people claiming key out of work benefits was found to be at its lowest level for more than a decade.

There has been a significant increase in advanced and higher-level apprenticeships in the Black Country too, and more than 2,500 new homes were built in 2017 across the region, meaning the area now has 490,370 homes to accommodate 1.18m residents, a population which is expected to grow.

### Patients asked for opinion on service

PATIENTS are being asked to help develop options for the future of some cancer services in Sandwell and West Birmingham. An event in West Bromwich next week will be the first of a series of listening activities designed to ensure patient views influence the cancer review that is underway.

At the event, patients will be invited to give their feedback on their current experiences of services, suggestions on how the services could be run differently, as well as to outline what is important to them and what the priorities should be for selecting the potential options.

Services affected by the Cancer Review include solid tumour oncology services for lung, gastroenterology, colorectal, breast and gynaecological cancers.

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## Busy road to be one-way traffic

A MAIN road will become one-way for a month during a major roadworks scheme in Streetly.

Traffic will only run north along the stretch of Thornhill Road between the junctions of Chester Road and Hardwick Road between April 3 and April 29. Drivers have been warned to expect major disruption as restrictions will be in place for 24 hours a day.

Comex will be carrying out work on to install a telecomms duct on behalf of Virgin Media along the route which passes Sutton Park. Traffic regularly backs up at the busy island on Thornhill Road at peak times where it joins the Chester Road roundabout.

## UKIP call to keep work in Britain

UKIP has urged the Government to slash the foreign aid budget instead of allowing British passports to be made overseas.

West Midlands MEP Jill Seymour said ministers should be 'backing British business' by giving the contract for the new blue passports to a UK firm.

Mrs Seymour said: "These new blue passports are a symbol of Britain seizing back control from the European Union. As a result, the UK should be ensuring that they are made in Britain, by British companies, supporting British jobs."

## Volunteers needed for wildlife survey

WILDLIFE charity People's Trust for Endangered Species (PTES) is calling for volunteers to take part in its annual Living with Mammals survey, from this week onwards.

People are being asked to survey a garden or local green space once a week until Sunday, June 24 and record the wild mammals they see.

Volunteers can submit their findings online at [www.ptes.org/lwm](http://www.ptes.org/lwm), which is also home to a guide on how to spot mammals.

To take part, register online at [www.ptes.org/lwm](http://www.ptes.org/lwm)

## Demolition plan for buildings lodged

PLANS have been put forward to demolish a set of run-down buildings in Wolverhampton and create a block of 10 apartments in its place.

But the proposals for Holme Cottage and The Cottage in Bee Lane have caused concerns over parking amongst neighbours. They say the idea to create only 11 parking spaces for 10 apartments will force the occupiers to park inappropriately on narrow residential roads.

# Park strives for prestigious Green Flag



Jeff McBride, Mark Hickman and Darlaston councillor Paul Bott

A PARK team is appealing for help from the public to win a prestigious Green Flag award.

After Darlaston's Kings Hill Park was rated as one of the best in the borough as part of an independent assessment, Friends of Darlaston South Parks are aiming for the prestigious internationally-recognised award which would make it the sixth park to be awarded a Green Flag in Walsall.

Healthy walks and a programme of gym sessions have been planned for spring and summer in order to strive towards earning the award.

The group is also calling for volunteers to join and have asked for local residents, community groups and organisations to get in touch to help shape the activities held there and pitch their ideas on how to make the park a better place to visit.

Councillor Paul Bott, chairman of Friends of Darlaston South Parks, said: "We would like to hear from local residents and regular visitors to the park. We are planning a series of meetings where people can come together to help shape the future."

The group received more than a

quarter of a million pounds of funding granted in 2012 which has gone towards improving fences, frontage, general refurbishment and a public art feature. Members have recently purchased two British Oaks to commemorate the centenary of the end of World War One and the first will be planted in the coming weeks.

Anyone who is interested in finding out more about Kings Hill Park and what it can offer, or anyone with ideas, has been asked to contact Clean and Green on 01922 653344 or email [cleanandgreen@walsall.gov.uk](mailto:cleanandgreen@walsall.gov.uk)

# Housing estate plans at eyesore land backed

PLANS for more than 260 homes at a former industrial site in Bloxwich blighted by anti-social behaviour have been given the green light by council chiefs.

Outline proposals for the 263 new homes on the old Elkington brass works and Cerro EMS factory in Goscote Lane have been recommended for approval.

The site has lain derelict for nearly a decade and has 'fallen into disrepair', according to the developers.

Prior to the council planning meeting held last Thursday, Blakenall ward councillor Ann Young welcomed the plans, saying they would inject life into a vacant site and help meet the borough's housing need.

Councillor Young told the Express & Star: "There has been anti-social behaviour and fly-tipping there, and it looks like an eyesore. Of course it's also in our regeneration belt so ties in nicely with work that has already been done. "I just hope there is enough affordable homes for local people.

### Design

"But it will be very welcome - anything that improves that site given what residents have had to put up with will be a bonus."

As part of the plans there will also be three new points of access, and main estate roads built for the site.

A design statement submitted by developers St Francis Group and the Homes and Communities Agency says: "The regeneration of brownfield land formerly occupied by the Cerro EMS and Elkington Works presents the opportunity to comprehensively redevelop this long-standing redundant industrial site to create a new residential development."

"The underlying strategy is to regenerate Goscote Works to help transform the area and create a high quality environment which is fully integrated within the existing urban structure and meets the needs of modern living.

"The site has the opportunity to provide a range of new housing, identified as a strategic priority for Walsall Council and WHG."

## Looking back to the Peaky past-a



Peaky Blinders event at Gio's, back left, Vicki Phipps, Giovanni Ranallo and front Ian Robbins

AN Italian restaurant will be switching on the style and turning back the clock for a Peaky Blinders-themed evening. Staff will be kitted out in wide trousers and waistcoats for the 1920s fashion extravaganza on April 8.

The TV series about the Birmingham-based gang quickly caught the public imagination after it was first broadcast in 2013 and next year will see the screening of the show's fifth series.

Giovanni Ranallo, who runs

Gio's Italian in Walsall, will host the special evening, which has been organised by fellow traders Mindful Gifts in Darlaston, which specialises in gift ideas and activities for people with dementia. The two businesses recently ran a successful Titanic-themed evening and are planning a programme of nostalgic-style events which will be rolled out over the next few months.

Mr Ranallo, 49, who was brought up in Walsall but lived in

Italy for 25 years, opened his restaurant in New Forest Road three years ago. He said: "We just want people to enjoy reminiscing and to have some fun. We're encouraging everyone to dress up, not just the staff."

The meals will be traditional, with dishes such as faggots and peas, liver and bacon and Birmingham pea stew on the menu. Customers will eat off tin plates and drink out of enamel mugs. Around 40 places are available.

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## IN MY VIEW

with Mark Andrews



# Curtain up on many more years of misery

WALKING through Dudley at the weekend, doing the weekly search for the shops, it struck me. Wandering between Dudley College Evolve, Dudley College Aspire, Dudley College Broadway Campus, and Dudley College Sixth, I realised: what this town really needs is another college campus.

Actually, that's not strictly true. In that it's not true at all. But it does seem to be the thought process of the leader of Dudley Council, who a few weeks ago spoke of "some exciting plans" for the town's disused Hippodrome theatre.

The exciting plans, it turns out, involve asking Dudley College if it would like to knock down the Hippodrome and build a college building on the site, ending "years of misery". Which is interesting, because when the council bought the theatre eight years ago, it said it was part of a comprehensive regeneration scheme to "create a leisure and tourism hub". Nothing was said about "years of misery".

Seriously, though, what would actually be less exciting than another college building in the town? A national paint-drying exhibition? An audience with Karen Brady? A couple of hours listening to Wolves supporters droning on about their Champions League ambitions?

Councillor Patrick Harley says the college has been at the forefront of the town's regeneration, and it has spent a lot of money on new buildings, many of them very nice. But does filling prime development sites with buildings most of us will never set foot in really constitute "regeneration"? Yes it will bring students into town, which is great for Greggs and Costa. But students, by definition, tend to have low disposable incomes. A strange way of reviving a struggling high street.

Now, I'm sorry if I keep banging on about this, and perhaps it is time to take up stamp collecting or something. But it is hard to think how successive councils, of both colours, could have handled this worse.

First, the "years of misery" were brought on entirely by the council using taxpayers' money to buy a building it had no real plans for. Then it misjudged the public mood, assuming it could be quietly demolished without fuss. It then attempted to quell the inevitable backlash with a string of uninspiring plans. And when a private company wanted to invest £8 million in the theatre, it dithered about car parking. Now the council has run out of patience.

Realistically, we can't expect councils to pour millions into renovating old theatres. But if this is the best it can come up with, then I suspect there will be many more years of misery to come.

## If fee was agreed for tennis TV work stop complaining



Christopher Eccleston – now does not refer to his time on Doctor Who



Martina Navratilova – not happy that she was paid less than John McEnroe



Boris Johnson – was this just a sudden case of Biggles Syndrome

# Serving up moans over pay equality

ARE you beginning to suffer from equality overload? Me, too. Martina Navratilova complains that she was paid "only" £15,000 for her stint as a commentator at Wimbledon while John McEnroe got "at least £150,000." Really? So flippin' what? Is it worth pointing out that, at the peak of their game, both of these tennis stars were paid much, much more than the ball boys? In spats like this involving the super-rich there's only one question that should be asked: Were you paid the sum that you or your agent negotiated and agreed to accept? If the answer is yes, stop wasting our time.

IF tennis throws up pay anomalies, God help us if the equality police get to work on Glastonbury. I strongly suspect that performers at music festivals are paid not by gender, age or race but solely on the basis of their market value.

AND while we're at it, has anyone noticed that the winner in Olympic sports gets a gold medal but the runner-up only gets silver and number three gets bronze? How long can this scandal go on?

I WAS rather hoping the Cambridge Analytica data scandal was going to fade away before I had to pretend I understood it.

BUT basically it's about the harvesting, selling and misuse of billions of items of personal information about millions of Facebook users. Yet surely it only qualifies as a genuine scandal if those people are scandalised. Are they?

IF you remember the Cold War and George Orwell's novel Nineteen Eighty-four, you belong to a generation which grew up cherishing privacy and living in fear of Big Brother. But to

## THE BEST OF PETER RHODES



day millions of people seem not only willing but eager to blab every detail of their own lives on social media. Secrets tortured out of Winston Smith in Room 101 are today freely volunteered. Some folk seem perfectly relaxed about their information being bought and sold, so long as it gets them a fleeting moment of fame or makes buying things on eBay a nano-second quicker. Middle-aged liberal hacks and crusty politicians may queue up to express outrage at this cyber-scandal but how many kids give a damn?

A TIME Lord has become a non-person. There is clearly no love lost between Christopher Eccleston and the BBC whom he accuses of putting him on a blacklist after he left Doctor Who. Starring as Macbeth at Stratford (and doing a brilliant job), the actor's attitude to Auntie Beeb is seen in the production's programme where artists list the film, theatre and TV work of which they are most proud. Eccleston's lengthy CV does not even mention Doctor Who.

A QUICK-build bridge collapsed in Florida, killing six people. Councils all over the States are waiting to find out why. As one official in Wisconsin put it: "We want to . . . see if any of the lessons learned would be applicable here." Bridges have been with us since the first cave-man laid a tree across a stream a million years ago. The problem is not discovering new lessons. It's remembering old ones.

YEARS from now historians will wonder how a

British foreign secretary made the quantum leap from a few traces of nerve agent in Salisbury to personally blaming the Russian president. And then they will examine the footage more closely and notice that Boris Johnson was speaking at the Battle of Britain Bunker museum in Uxbridge, standing right in front of the most iconic warplane of all time. Boris may have been suffering from a sudden case of Biggles Syndrome, an irrational stirring of the blood caused by close exposure to a Supermarine Spitfire.

BIGGLES Syndrome can be serious. At about the same time as Boris was going off-script, I watched a 1944 DC-3 Dakota transport plane fly over in black-and-white D-Day livery. I had a sudden impulse to invade Normandy.

NEVER let it be said that, when it comes to punishing the ungodly, readers lack inventiveness. After a court report on a particularly unpleasant attack on two pensioners, here's one online suggestion of what to do with the defendant: "He should have all of his skin removed with acid and a sanding machine, every bone broken with a sledgehammer, every joint destroyed with a power drill, every appendage amputated with garden shears. Only then should he be put out of his misery, by being fed to a swarm of rats." Put him out of his misery? What bleeding-heart, kid-glove liberal nonsense is this? No wonder we lost the Empire.

FAREWELL, winter, and with it the annual debate about what to call the pain when you put frozen hands in warm water after a snowball fight. A friend suggests 'finger cramps' but at Chateau Rhodes we are sticking with 'hot aches'. Suggestions welcome (apart from the obvious one that I ought to get out more).

## TALKING POINT



# Firms can do more to build their reputation

REGULAR Talking Point readers may recall I previously mentioned a parking fine I received for overstaying my welcome. I suggested common sense would hopefully prevail and that the fine may be waived on appeal. It wasn't. So, accept it, move on, live and learn.

Now another parking matter has led me to think about big firms, how they treat their customers and how word of mouth can enhance – or ruin – a reputation.

My issue this time relates to a car park in Wolverhampton. A number of us travel in together and use a particular car park near the city centre, which is reasonably priced at just £2.40 per day. To obtain a ticket, the last three letters of the car's registration must be inputted.

Fair enough, I suppose, as it prevents a driver leaving the car park from passing on to another just arriving.

We know its aim is to make a profit. However, it is not so easy for customers to get any money back.

One morning, after paying our fee, we realised only the last two letters of the registration had been keyed in. So, fearing this would be noted and action taken, we bought another ticket. This time with the correct three letters.

I rang the company to explain this and was told that if I emailed a brief description with pictures of the tickets the money would be reimbursed. An automated email came back, to say the would be responded to as soon as possible.

A week later, having still not heard anything back, I rang them. "The emails are usually picked up after seven days so contact us again in a week if you've heard nothing," I was politely told.

It was three weeks later before I got in touch again. Guess what? There was no record of my email ever being received.

I was advised to resend the original email, it would go to the top of the pile and be dealt with. The result? Another automated reply, which probably means another seven days before it is even looked at.

And all this for just £2.40. Is it worth it? Well, yes it is. It's my money. How many others, for the sake of a paltry sum would think it's not worth the hassle? How many extra £2.40s is that for the company?

I could refuse to use the car park, or others offended by the firm, and tell others to do the same, reducing its income. There are alternative options after all.

It's in this way that reputations can be built or tarnished. Such actions discourage clients, not attract them – and I believe they should be brought to account.

They make enough money as it is without holding on to my £2.40 as well.

MARK SHIPP

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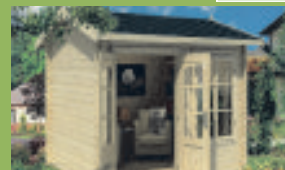
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# Armistice site is part of historic wartime tour

THIS year marks the centenary of the signing of the armistice in the forest of Compiègne in northern France that ended the First World War.

French commander-in-chief Marshal Foch convened the armistice talks near the tiny village of Rethondes on November 11, 1918. A memorial site now covers the treaty area. There is also a statue of Marshal Foch.

During the Second World War, a second armistice was signed in the forest between France and Nazi Germany on June 22, 1940. Today, the site remains as a memorial to both major

world events, and hosts a museum which houses a replica of the original railway carriage in which the treaties were signed.

This summer, Midlands-based research group Battlefield Memorial Tours will be taking a coach party to visit this historic site. The trip - from Friday, June 22, to Wednesday, June 27 - will also take in a number of key sites on the Ypres Salient, Belgium, and in the Somme area of northern France.

Battlefield Memorial Tours is an organisation that has evolved from a

research group founded 45 years ago by the late Alex Bulloch. Mr Bulloch, a former Birmingham policeman, had an extensive knowledge of military history, and was awarded an MBE in 2008 for his valuable work in guiding and helping large numbers of people to visit the battlefields and memorials of Europe. For further details, visit [www.battlefieldmemorialtours.co.uk](http://www.battlefieldmemorialtours.co.uk) or contact Malcolm Payne on 07850 775723 or Brian Long on 01629 650780.

**JOHN PHILLPOTT**  
Press and publicity  
Battlefield Memorial Tours

## FTI pointing to hopes of a soft Brexit

I AM not sure why Roland Twynam, letters March 6, describes my letters as rants. However, let us get down to the content of Mr Twynam's letter concerning FTI Consulting.

I regularly read their articles and I remember one which said they had spoken to 2,500 large concerns in France, Germany, Spain and the UK and they had said that if there was no clarity on the UK/EU relationship by June 2018 then irreversible business plans will be put into place.

The majority of respondents expected a soft Brexit, where there would still be free movement and the EJC would still have jurisdiction. Not what Messrs Johnson and Rees-Mogg want, I believe. I also remember one which said negotiating a free trade agreement will be a very hard and inevitably long drawn out process for which we have few skilled negotiators.

**ROGER WATTS**  
Walsall

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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## Inquiry needed on rising energy costs

RECENTLY we have been all in it together, as temperatures have plunged below zero and blizzards have raged across the UK. How many people are frightened to leave the heating on?

Elderly people are proud and afraid of poverty, some desperately cold they go to bed. Move into one room to keep energy bills down. Our Government urgently needs to look at the affordability of energy. Millions of our poorest households will not claim Winter Fuel Allowance. Instead of tax subsidies to the 'Big Six' energy companies, Government should increase the level of financial support immediately.

**CLLR DOUG JAMES**  
Walsall

## At tipping point over school cash

WE may be reaching a tipping point on school funding. In recent days reports have been coming in proving what school leaders already know - budgets are at breaking point.

The Education Policy Institute reported that the proportion of local authority maintained secondary schools in deficit has nearly trebled, with more than 60 per cent spending more than their income in 2016-17. The 2018 Academies Benchmark Report revealed 55 per cent of the 450 academy trusts audited up to August 2017 were in deficit.

No school is immune. Primary and secondary, academy and local authority, mainstream and specialist; the entire state-funded school system is rapidly heading towards insolvency.

The government's only option now is to find more money for schools, as they are doing for the NHS.

**PAUL WHITEMAN**  
General secretary, school leaders' union NAHT

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# Proud Mary's family share special 100th

A SELFLESS former matron who helped care for children with special educational needs has celebrated her 100th birthday.

Mary Winkle marked the special occasion at The Manor House residential home in Willenhall along with family members.

Mrs Winkle was born in the final year of the First World War and spent her early life in Darlaston.

She met her husband George in the town and they married in June 1940.

Mrs Winkle worked at Charles Richards in Darlaston while her husband was a part of the town's Home Guard, and worked at Rubery Owen helping manufacture Mulberry harbours for the war effort.

## Abroad

She later spent 20 years working as a matron in Lichfield at a residential home for children with special needs - where she was joined by George.

The couple enjoyed caravanning and enjoying trips abroad. They had one daughter, Gill, aged 71, and have two grandchildren - 50-year-old Vanessa and 47-year-old Alison. Mr Winkle died aged 68 in 1986.

Mrs Love, 71, said her mother's caring nature was proven at Christmas. She said: "When mum was working in Lichfield she used to tell her staff and all her carers to go and spend Christmas with their families. Then dad and her used to take children to their house and give them a family Christmas as if they were in their own home."

"That's the type of person she was." Mrs Love added: "Mum is still so vibrant and can still remember so many things from her past - it's unbelievable."



Mary Winkle marks her 100th with daughter Gillian Love and granddaughter Vanessa

# HomeServe on the shortlist

HOME assistance provider HomeServe has been shortlisted for a trio of national awards.

Walsall-based HomeServe, which employs around 3,000 people nationwide and has offices in Walsall, Preston, Banbury and Nottingham, has made the final shortlist in the employee engagement and business transformation categories at the Employee Experience Awards.

Also HomeServe Membership chief executive Greg Reed has made the

final four in the leader in employee experience category after he led the way in making HomeServe one of the country's best places to work, according to independent careers website Glassdoor.

The awards will be handed out at a ceremony on May 17 at the Park Plaza Riverbank in London.

"We're incredibly proud to have been recognised in this way and nominated along with some fantastic companies," said Mr Reed.

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Kiki shows she's still got the music in her



Music legend Kiki Dee, with conductor Matthew Jones SINGER Kiki Dee proved that she's still got the music in her when she led a singing session organised by a musician from Walsall. The singer, real name Pauline Matthews, was sharing her pearls of wisdom at a day-long choir camp at Ingestre Hall, near, Stafford, alongside organiser Matthew Jones, from Walsall.

Kiki's career dates back to the early 60s but she is perhaps best known for her collaboration with Sir Elton John on the number one hit Don't Go Breaking My Heart in 1976. She said: "All levels of choir singers have come today. Matthew wants them to go away feeling like they have achieved something great."

Kiki's hits I've Got The Music In Me and Amoureux were performed. Kiki and Matthew led the singing as the audience joined in. Matthew said: "I don't just believe anybody can sing. I believe anybody can learn to sing to an exceptionally high standard. The opportunity for everybody here to work with somebody like Kiki Dee is a real treat."

Kiki, who is currently on tour, got involved with the event following a meeting with Matthew in London last year. She said: "I have got to one point in my life now where if I fancy doing something, I have got the freedom to do it."

# Appeal as couple are targeted in £15k fraud

AN elderly couple have been scammed out of more than £15,000. Police are appealing after the victims, from Great Wyrley, received a call from a man claiming to be an officer with the fraud squad based in London.

He told them he was calling because there had been some unusual activity using their bank card.

Over the next few days they were called several times and were eventually persuaded to withdraw £15,500 from two bank accounts on the pretext of helping police trace the fraudsters.

They were instructed to place the cash in an envelope, which was collected by a "courier" using a given password on March 13.

The man who collected the money was described as Asian, aged between 30 and 35, about 5ft 10ins tall and wearing a sweater and trousers.

Detective Inspector Robert Harvmann of Staffordshire Police, said: "These callous fraudsters tend to prey on the elderly and pretend to be police officers to gain their victims' trust."

By Tom Oakley

"Please remember that the police or your bank would never ask you to aid an investigation by withdrawing or transferring money."

"Never give out or confirm personal or financial information to anyone over the phone."

"If you receive one of these calls, end it immediately. Do not engage in conversation, they will try to cause panic and fear to get you collect money for them."

"If you believe you have been a victim of this type of crime, call us on 101. If you have any information regarding those responsible for such crimes, contact Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111."

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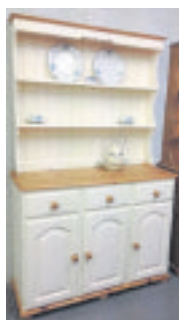
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# Waterway to tell story of canal boat women

A TOURING theatre company during a series of new shows will bring to life the stories on women who took on the challenging job of operating pairs of canal boats in the Second World War.

They took to the waterways when there was a shortage of crews and were responsible for many different delivery routes around the region.

Alarum Theatre Company Idle Women of the Wartime Waterways will shine the spotlight on their experiences

The show is a double bill, featuring poems and songs by Heather Wastie, and a solo play by Kate Saffin, and has been created using first-hand accounts, diaries, archive material and audio interviews.

## Touring

During April and May they will be following, by boat, the route worked by a Worcestershire woman, Daphne March, who carried flour on her family-owned boat Heather Bell from Worcester to Tipton, and coal from Cannock to Worcester, throughout the war.

Former Worcestershire Poet Laureate Heather, who lives in Cookley near Kidderminster but was born in the Black Country, has been touring her own poetry and songs with Alarum Theatre since April 2016.

"The women whose stories we tell don't get the recognition they deserve. Most people have never heard of them. They didn't have a proper name; they were just called 'trainees', even after they'd passed their training. "The nickname 'Idle Women' came



Heather Wastie and Kate Saffin, who will be appearing around the region

after the war, and my half of the show explains where that came from.

"By quoting from first-hand accounts of the trainees themselves, we bring to life what the women went through when they left behind their ordinary middle-class lives in favour of long hours, hard labour and having to spend a lot of time in close proximity to other women in very cramped and challenging conditions."

"Kate and I met by chance on Twitter."

"Kate lives on a narrow boat and I live in a house very close to the Staffs

& Wores Canal. My family had a boat from when I was very young, so you could say that canals are in my DNA," said Heather.

Performances will take place on May 2 at The Boathouse in Rushall, on May 4 at Longwood Boat Club in Walsall, on May 8 at The Fingerpost in Pelsall, on May 9 at Yates Sport and Social Club in Pelsall and on May 12 on Calf Heath Marina, Wolverhampton.

For full tour details see alarumtheatre.co.uk and to book tickets visit eventbrite.co.uk/o/alarum-theatre-9882552992.



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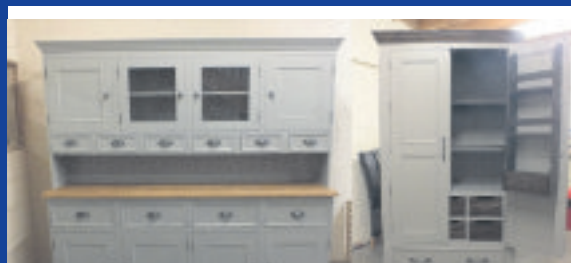
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# Councillors say 'get on with it' over Junction 10



Around 8,000 vehicles pass through Junction 10 every hour during peak times

**'LETS get on with it' - that's the message from councillors after major improvements to Junction 10 of the M6 were given the green light.**

The mammoth multi-million pound project to ease congestion and improve safety on the busy junction was approved at a Walsall Council meeting last Friday.

It's hoped changes to the 50-year-old

junction will improve highway capacity and reduce delays with two new widened bridges over the M6, improvements to the junction slip roads and modifications to adjacent local roads.

"Intelligent" traffic signals will also be installed to improve safety. Councillor Mike Bird said: "This is the biggest car park in Europe at the moment."

"It is a very important project to Walsall and it is of equal importance to people who use the motorway. It is a great scheme for all those involved."

Lets get on with it." The new bridges will replace the current ones and will have four lanes, increasing the capacity from 8,000 to 10,500 vehicles an hour. The crossroads junction on the Black Country Route and the A454 at the turn off for Tempus Drive and Bloxwich Lane will also be widened.

The two-year £64.5 million scheme for the junction, where the motorway meets the Black Country Route and Wolverhampton Road, was first proposed in 2015.

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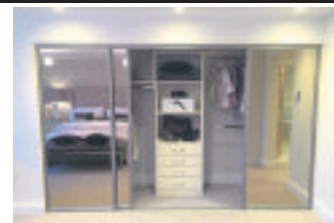


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# Top Easter savings at Aldridge Fireplaces

## Commercial feature

AS the Easter break is upon us and summertime is fast approaching finally!!! Why not take advantage of some spectacular savings, by visiting Aldridge Fireplaces' buoyant fireplace showroom in the centre of Aldridge village.

With the clocks going forward last weekend hopefully we are going to see some improvement in our weather.

If your old gas fire needs replacing after the winter we've had, there's no better time to purchase than this weekend.

Aldridge Fireplaces is a family-owned business with brothers Matt and Dan Pennell at the helm. "Our emphasis is based on a relaxed, personal service where we offer a no rush service," Matt states.

"We realise your fireplace purchase is probably one you are only going to make once in around 20 years or even once in a lifetime, so if the customer can't decide in the shop we will visit each individual home to offer our expert opinion."

## Testimonials

The stylish showroom features some exclusive marble and Portuguese limestone displays, solid wood and stone surrounds.

"We also now offer a wide range of wood burning stoves," states Dan.

It's been a really positive few years after the company received the most testimonials in 2016 for 'most loved fireplace shop' in the UK via the best of Walsall website.

2017 saw Aldridge Fireplaces finish 3rd after its category was extended to home improvements, but it was still top fireplace showroom in the UK (on the best of sites).

It now has well over 125 testimonials on the



The showroom in Anchor Road, Aldridge

bestofwalsall website which can be viewed at [www.bestofwalsall.co.uk](http://www.bestofwalsall.co.uk). The experienced sales staff are also able to offer packages to suit all ages, styles and budgets.

This year they are celebrating their 10th year anniversary so the guys wanted to give their loyal customers something back by offering there customers there biggest and best offer to date.

Dan states: "We feel its a great time for couples and families to get out and about this weekend so we are offering 50 per cent off ANY gas or electric fire when purchased with one of our fireplace suites."

In addition to this we have our ever present existing offer of FREE FITTING on.

Dan adds: "We feel no other company locally are offering this so it sets us out from the rest."

The offer starts at 10am Good Friday from 10am-4.30pm. Saturday 10am-4.30pm, Sunday closed and reopening Bank Holiday Monday 10am-4pm.

Aldridge fireplaces is located at 51a Anchor Road, Aldridge, WS9 8PT, opposite the Crown Carvery (the Elms pub).

Telephone: 01922 458017.



Some of the fires on display inside the showroom



Examples of the wide choice on show at the Anchor Road premises



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# All eyes on 1,000th apprentice Madison



Madison Chaney, with staff, started on the Specsavers apprenticeship scheme at the Brownhills High Street branch AN opticians' latest recruit has become the company's 1,000th apprentice. Madison Chaney, aged 21, started on the Specsavers apprenticeship scheme at the Brownhills High Street store a few weeks ago.

The programme offers learners an opportunity to enter the world of work in a safe and structured way, providing them with a real job, great training and a qualification.

Store director Justine Page said: "Every day she arrives smiling and ready to take on whatever the day holds. She's an inspiration and we couldn't be any more proud of her."

Ms Chaney was rewarded with a trophy celebrating her becoming Specsavers' 1000th apprentice, as well as a £50 Amazon voucher. The presentation was made by Mark Cordon, head of apprenticeships for Specsavers.

She said: 'I started studying music performance at university, but it wasn't the right fit for me. When I fell ill and had to stop my studies, I saw it as a fresh opportunity to make a start on a real career pathway with the potential to develop and learn as I work.'

# Bomb hoax caused by Minecraft game rivals

A HOAX that targeted hundreds of schools was part of a feud between rival Minecraft gamers, according to reports.

Last Monday's hoax saw 24,000 threatening emails sent to schools and colleges in the UK. Walsall College was among the institutions affected and evacuated thousands of students across all its campuses.

Police are investigating the incident, but say there was 'no viable' threat to schools. The emails, thought to have originated in the US, were made to look as if they had been sent by a gaming network called VeltPvP.

They are believed to have been intended to cause the domain to be suspended for abuse and are thought to have been sent by a group aiming to discredit VeltPvP, a Minecraft player-versus-player server, which businesses use to sell products to gamers. Those involved in the feud claimed opponents had engaged in illegal activities in order to hinder the other business.

"It is horrible, it's not the nicest thing," one of alleged hoaxers is reported to have said when asked whether he regretted the effect the letters had had on school

Report by Fiona Smith

children forced to evacuate. Placing the blame on VeltPvP, the hoaxer said the network had engaged in a campaign of attacks, which he alleged were used to try and shut down other rival Minecraft servers.

The hoaxer admitted he was at risk of being arrested for his actions. In a statement, VeltPvP said: "We've been harassed by a group of cybercriminals. We're extremely sorry for anyone who had to deal with this, but just know it's fake."

Walsall College stayed shut for the day after the evacuation. Campuses on Littleton Street West, Green Lane, Broadway and Portland Street were affected, with scores of students turned away as they attempted to enter sites.



## Easter Bonanza Madness Prices Slashed on shop floor models 3+1+1 suits to clear at crazy prices



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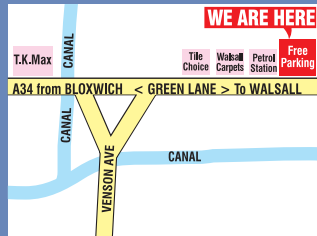
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# 14 Inquest opens on bike pair

The Chronicle Thursday, March 29, 2018

TWO teenagers died when the motorcycle they were on crashed into the side of a car, an inquest heard.

The inquest on Alex Lees, aged 19, and Tarik Campbell, 18, was opened and adjourned at Black Country Coroner's Court, with both families in attendance.

The friends, both from Walsall, died on March 13 after a crash at about 11.35pm on Broadway West. Assistant coroner Emma Serrano heard that student Alex had ridden his black Suzuki GSF 600 motorbike to pick up Tarik from the end of his McDonald's shift.

Alex was driving with Tarik as the pillion passenger along Broadway West, when a red Rover car turned right. The driver was arrested and produced a positive breath test. A review hearing is due on June 12.

# Clubs to pay more for match day policing bill

**FOOTBALL clubs across the West Midlands have been told to stump up more cash to pay for their matches to be policed.**

From next season, West Midlands Police will charge around 10 per cent more for officers to police games involving the likes of Villa, Albion, Wolves and Walsall.

And for games on bank holidays, the fees will rise by around 36 per cent for a constable on duty.

It will inject around £80,000 into the coffers of the region's cash-strapped force – slightly more than Albion captain Jonny Evans' weekly wage.

The increased charges were discussed at a meeting of the West Midlands Police and Crime strategic board.

By Pete Madeley

A report to the board said that in the past WMP had been 'effectively subsidising clubs for the cost of policing'.

The move would have raised an extra £188,000 but the figure will be reduced to around £80,000 as a result of Suffolk Police losing a legal case against Ipswich Town over paying for policing on match days.

## Balance

The ruling, which cannot be appealed, will cost WMP an estimated £110,000 a year.

WMP's Chief Financial Officer Mark Kenyon said the force had been charging 'significantly less' than others and wanted to redress the balance.

PCC David Jamieson added: "From

next season, I am ensuring West Midlands Police increases its charges in line with other forces.

"When changes to charging are considered this will bring in about £80,000 a year, spread across the region's clubs.

"The increase in these fees amounts to no more than some clubs pay their top players each week."

The current standard fee for a constable on match days is £58.91, rising to £75.31 for games on public holidays. From next season the charges will be £64.84 and £102.51 respectively.

WMP said a consultation with the region's football clubs was currently taking place.

In a landmark legal case in October, the High Court ruled that clubs were not responsible for policing the roads around their stadiums during match days.

# It all adds up to fun for James



Who says maths isn't fun? Students at Landywood Primary School in Great Wyrley made their own personalised maths-themed board games as part of their school maths day which took place last week. Nine-year-old pupil James Durrant was among those who enjoyed coming up with his own design.

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# Tom has Lara fun with co-star in blockbuster

A BLACK Country actor who stars in new Hollywood blockbuster Tomb Raider headed back to the region for a screening of the film.

Antonio Aakeel, from Wolverhampton, visited the Light Cinema in Walsall to mark the release of Tomb Raider.

Mr Aakeel stars alongside Oscar winner Alicia Vikander as heroine Lara Croft in the film based on the popular video game.

The movie follows Lara as she embarks on a journey to uncover the mystery behind her father's disappearance.

Mr Aakeel, aged 22, has landed the coveted role of Nitin, a friend to Lara.

He said: "I couldn't quite believe it when I got the call I had landed Tomb Raider. It was at the end of shooting [for another film] and I'd been asked to put myself on tape with two hours' notice. I filmed it outside my trailer on my lunchbreak and luckily it got me the part."

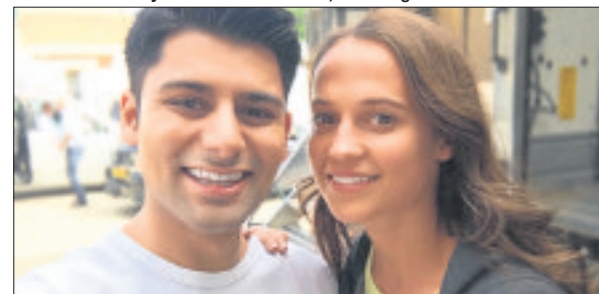
Mr Aakeel has previously starred in BBC Films' City of Tiny Lights opposite Billie Piper and Riz Ahmed and last year featured in the harrowing BBC One drama Three Girls.

After his visit to the Light Cinema, marketing executive Andy Smallman said: "Antonio is a very humble person and it's so great to see local talent back. He is a benchmark for the next generation of talent, showing them that hard work and dedication can lead to huge opportunities like starring in Hollywood films."

Mr Aakeel, who went to Holyhead Primary School in Wednesbury, followed by Wodensborough Ormiston Academy, described Miss Vikander as 'a phenomenal talent', adding: "We got on instantly and it's clear just



Black Country actor Antonio Aakeel, at the Light Cinema in Walsall



Antonio Aakeel with Alicia Vikander, who plays Lara Croft in the film

how incredibly hard she has worked to bring Lara to life. From the day we met, we had a natural spark which I feel really aided the performance."

Mr Aakeel said he caught the acting bug after being given a one-line role in the Christmas play at Holyhead Primary. He was born in Whitmore Reans and took acting lessons in Bir-

mingham. He went on to land a small role in popular E4 show Skins, bagging the part after auditioning against 500 other hopefuls.

After a couple of lead roles in BBC drama Doctors and a prominent character role in international film The Line of Freedom his career has continued on an upwards trajectory.

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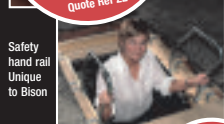
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An Airspeed Oxford like the most common aircraft at RAF Perton



The HQ building after the War as a private house



A Douglas Boston light bomber on Perton



Dutch soldiers helping build their camp



The Maintenance Squadron outside the hangar

# Airfield took off where now the golfers tee off

ONE hundred years ago on April 1, 1918 the Royal Air Force was born, combining the aerial arms of the Navy and the Army.

Near Wolverhampton there was only one RAF airfield – at Perton. This was not the later RAF Perton where the housing estate now is, but nearer to Pattingham on the Fern Fields, where Perton Park Golf Club is now.

It had been built in 1916 as a Relief Landing Ground for anti-Zeppelin flights. Labourers building the railway line through Tettenhall had been taken up the Ridge to do the work, little more than grubbing up hedges and levelling the ground.

There was probably little actual flying, although the field became the de-facto airfield for Wolverhampton between the wars, until the new Municipal Airport at Pendeford was opened in 1936.

After the Second World War started,

## MEMORY LANE

By Alec Brew

the RAF returned to the Wrottesley Estate to build a new airfield on the other side of Wrottesley Road.

It was built as a fighter station with three runways and a single T2 hangar, with accommodation buildings stretching as far as the Newport Road, where the gatehouse was built.

### Policies

It was officially finished in August 1941, but the first aircraft did not land until November when a Magister trainer undertook a forced landing.

Policies changed and Perton became a satellite training field, firstly for the Miles Master advanced trainers from RAF Tern Hill, and then the Airspeed Oxford twin engine trainers from Shawbury.

The accommodation units were redundant, and were taken over by the Princess Irene Brigade of the Dutch

Army, more buildings being erected to house up to 1,500 Dutch soldiers.

Boulton Paul used the airfield a little when they were undertaking modifications on Douglas Boston light bombers, which could not use the short grass runways at Pendeford.

And there were lots of visiting aircraft, many of them lost, such as a B-17 Flying Fortress which was damaged when it hit a civilian lorry on the runway during its unscheduled landing; much to the annoyance of the crew who were going home to the States on leave.

RAF Perton closed soon after the war and the Dutch camp was used to house displaced persons from Poland, Latvia and Lithuania. The runways were used by model flyers and motor cyclists, until the plan to build the new housing estate was born.

Now Perton Library is hosting an exhibition of the airfield's history, put together by the Tettenhall Transport Heritage Centre, to celebrate one hundred years of the Royal Air Force.



Queen Wilhelmina of the Netherlands at Perton

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## Wolves' history told in London tube map

FROM Wagstaffe and Wright to Bully and Broadbent – a football fan is putting Wolves on the map.

Mike Cochrane has designed a special Tube-style map highlighting the illustrious history of the club through the ages.

The 50-year-old, who lives in Warrington, has been depicting the past of some of Britain's biggest clubs through the Tube map of London for more than three years and has made 22 teams in all. He has also designed a Tube map for the England rugby team.

The Wolves map charts the history of the club a decade at a time.

Mr Cochrane, who is originally from Cardiff, worked in HR for 30 years before taking up designing Tube maps as his full-time job. The map is currently on sale from £24 on his website. There is already an Aston Villa version, and a West Brom one is on its way.

### Decades

He said: "You can see the appearances and goals and I put the promotions on too. I put some stuff about the ground, when they first played at Molineux and any former grounds before that."

"The idea is that you start at the top left – it's not a copy of the Tube map but I call it reimagined – each line is a decade, you start at the top left, it moves to the right and through the decades."

It takes Mr Cochrane six weeks to do a club's map. He begins with extensive research into the history before drawing a rough draft and starting to properly design the final copy.

The standard A3 print costs £24 but a limited edition, signed and numbered version can be bought for £75. Go to tubeart.co.uk and search Wolves.



An extract from the Wolves tube map designed by Mike Cochrane

## Kidney unit marks 30 years

THE 30th anniversary of a special kidney unit in Wolverhampton is being celebrated.

The first dialysis patient was treated at a temporary New Cross Hospital department in 1986. The main unit opened in 1987 while 2009 marked the beginning of the home haemodialysis programme, which allowed patients to dialyse from home for the first time.

The renal services team marked three decades of looking after kidney patients at the Royal Wolverhampton

NHS Trust at a grand ball at the Ramada Park Hall Hotel, honouring those who have been instrumental in developing the service at New Cross, including founder Dr Maurice Jackson, Professor Paul Rylance, the trust's medical director Dr Jonathan Odum, clinical director of renal services Dr Shashidar Cherukuri and Helen Spooner, advanced nurse practitioner.

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# Banners up in education cuts protest



Pinfold Primary head teacher Sally-Ann Sinclair, with Councillor Doug James during the cuts protest

# Councillor joins forces with schools campaign

ALMOST 100 schools in the Black Country and Staffordshire staged protests against cuts to education funding this week.

Banners claiming to reveal the 'real terms cut to school budgets' were put up outside 53 schools in Walsall.

While another 44 schools across the Black Country and Staffordshire also took part.

The demonstrations, which were organised by headteachers, staff and councillors, highlighted that Gov-

ernment cuts are placing schools under unbearable pressure.

Among schools taking part in the protests on Thursday was Pinfold School in Darlaston, where there were 60 parents at one point, according to organisers.

Darlaston councillor Doug James, headteacher at the school Sally-Ann Sinclair and general secretary of the National Education Union (NEU) for Walsall Russell Bragger were also in attendance. The National Education Union (NEU) says that Walsall schools are facing budget cuts of £9.5 million between 2015 and 2020.

Mr Bragger said this is equivalent

to 215 teacher's jobs and is an average cut of £242 per pupil per year. He said: "It was really good, there was lots of parents there who were all very concerned about the cuts."

"We're pleased with how it went and this is only the start of the campaign. We definitely got our message across, at one point there were about 60 parents but they were coming and going. There was 53 across Walsall and in total 200 across the West Midlands – there are only about 125 schools so we're getting on to half of them taking part."

Walsall Council were unavailable to comment.

# Jobs under threat in Carpetright restructure

CARPETRIGHT jobs are under threat as it draws up sweeping restructuring plans which will close poorly-performing stores and see it tap investors for up to £60 million.

The embattled retailer said it was 'exploring' a company voluntary arrangement to help shore up its financial position, a move which would allow it to close loss-making shops and secure deep discounts on rental costs.

If the CVA goes ahead, Carpetright would push through an equity issue of between £40m-£60m to fund plans to re-boot the business and drive down debt.

The group has 409 UK shops including branches in Walsall, Oldbury and two in Cannock, with another 138 stores in Ireland, Belgium and Holland, Carpetright employs around 3,000 people.

The company said it had also agreed a £12.5m unsecured loan from major shareholder Meditor to help with "short-term working capital requirements".

Carpetright, chief executive Wilf Walsh said it would be 'business as usual' for the stores during Easter and it would remain in 'close contact' with staff over its restructuring plans.

He said: "I am pleased that we have secured this additional support from one of our major shareholders as we continue to explore the feasibility of a CVA and a conditional equity issue."

"These further cash resources will enable us to make the necessary decisions free from short-term funding pressure."

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Ostara Ceramic Egg Decorations, set of 12, £36, OKA

# Hop to it for new Easter themed decor touches

By Gabrielle Fagan

IT'S time to get ready for the Bank Holiday feasts and fun and there are three key themes to consider this year. Easter is a time for celebrations, from egg hunts to gatherings of family and friends for a slap-up feast – and it makes the occasion even more special if you set the scene with some 'spring-spiced' decor touches.

There are three key looks to choose from. Get down with the kids and opt for pretty pastels, with a generous helping of fluffy bunnies (rabbits rule this year) and chicks, or be inspired by nature (this season's all about the outdoors bursting into life and colour).

Alternatively, go grown-up with a sophisticated setting and simple, subtle touches, that just pay a nod to the festival.

With Easter celebrations almost as big a deal as Christmas now, there's a brilliant selection of homeware and accessories to fill your nest with. Here are some of our favourites...

## Let rabbits rule in rooms

Hop to it and make the Easter Bunny the star of the show. Add to the fun with a wall display of family photos and embellish each face with cut out paper rabbit ears, and a nose and whiskers.

Let children create their own rabbit 'burrow' using a tent, or rig up a sheet draped over chairs for a den, where they can retreat and enjoy their egg-hunt hauls.

Follow the Scandinavian tradition and decorate tree branches, either gathered from the garden and sprayed white, or buy a ready-made Easter tree.

Hobbycraft has Decorative White Twig Trees from £18 each that would be ideal for the task. Hang with tiny ornaments, from bunnies and birds, to eggs and chicks. Garland and bunting will add to the atmosphere.

## Conjure a blooming natural setting

Spring is all about waking up from winter's dark days and welcoming new growth and life. Bringing nature-inspired elements into decor represents the season and Easter perfectly.

If the weather's not co-operating and your garden's bare, it's still easy to conjure a fresh setting of blooms and foliage. Feature small hand-tied bunches of fresh flowers in vases or clear glass jars, or create a display with faux blooms hanging above a table as a focal point.

Lay an artificial grass table runner down the centre as a finishing touch. Faux effects are so realistic now, it's sometimes barely



Arundel Oak Dining Table, from £1,455; Oak bench, from £435; South-down Sheepskin Rug, £125; Use a selection of fresh blooms for a hanging focal point or Neptune has a selection of faux stems including Peony, Pink, £14; Hydrangea, White, £19; English Rose Short Stem, Raspberry, £16; Dahlia Stem, Cream, £10, Neptune.

possible to distinguish them from the real thing.

Add to the theme with a table centre piece – either a pretty Easter wreath or faux birds' nest, and a scattering of animal ornaments. Chickens & Carnations Placemats (£35 for set of four) and matching Chicken

Coasters (£15 for set of four), from Thorn-back & Peel, would make a lovely addition.

## Lay an egg-celently elegant table

For a sophisticated setting at the Easter dining table, move away from pastels and cuteness and focus instead on a collection



Easter Egg Hanging Decorations in wood, set of six, £18; Glitter Rabbits Decorations, Assorted, pack of two, £4; Foam Bird Easter Decorations, Assorted, £5 each, Felt Hanging Bunny Rabbit, £2.50; Easter Hanging Egg Decoration, Gold Stripe, £3.50; John Lewis.



Chicken Shaped Serving Jug, Gisela Graham London, £6, The Contemporary Home.

of beautiful eggs framed in a garland of seasonal flowers.

Enhance the effect by tying a hanging egg decoration to the back of each chair with a name label attached, and add a couple of other tiny eggs beside the placemats, or in a bowl, for each guest.

## Nutrient-rich strawberry will be star of summer

TASTY, sweet and packed with nutrients, these juicy berries – and their leafy bits – deserve a star role this summer. It's difficult to resist a perfectly ripe strawberry, isn't it? In fact, they're one of the most popular berry fruits in the world – but did you know it's not just the sweet red part that's good for us?

Atop each juicy strawberry is a leafy top, called the calyx. Each year, tons of strawberry tops are discarded and chucked away as waste. But this humble leafy crown is actually edible, and may hold the key to unlocking some exciting health benefits.

This isn't just a nutrition issue either, but a question of waste – which is a hot topic right now. Three major WRAP studies estimated that 85% of avoidable food waste arises in households and food manufacture.

With this in mind, and to help us make the most of our produce, here, nutritionist Lily Soutter reveals some of the health benefits of munching your way through whole strawberries.

### 1. They're a rich source of antioxidants

Antioxidant-rich foods are important to help protect your cells against the effects of free radicals – harmful molecules produced from pollution, sunlight, smoke and even prolonged exercise. "Strawberries are a rich and diverse source of antioxidants. However, what's less well known is that strawberry calyx contains antioxidants too," says Soutter. "However it's important to note that as leaves become older, the ORAC value decreases, so the leaves of fresh strawberries are likely to provide the highest antioxidant value."

### 2. They support the immune system

Adding a punnet of strawberries to your shopping basket will help support your immune system too. "Not only is the whole strawberry rich in plant antioxidants, but the red fleshy part is also extremely rich in the antioxidant vitamin C," says Soutter.

### 3. They may help with blood sugar regulation

Next time you're thinking of pasta for dinner, try following up your meal with a bowl of fresh strawberries for pud. Research suggests eating strawberries, alongside a carbohydrate-rich meal, may help to reduce spikes in blood sugar and insulin levels. "While it's not clear why strawberries may have this blood sugar balancing effect, some studies have suggested that it may be down to their rich content of polyphenols (antioxidants), which may influence carbohydrate digestion and absorption."

### 4. They may have antimicrobial effects

As well as being delicious to eat, strawberries could also have a beneficial effect on the reproduction of bacteria and parasites in the body. "One study analysed the tops and leaves of 200 strawberry plants, and found their large and diverse range of polyphenols are defensive against harmful microbes, and may even have benefit to human health," says Soutter.

### 5. They may improve heart health

"Numerous studies have found an association between strawberry consumption and improved cardiovascular health," explains Soutter. "It appears their high content of berry anthocyanins may play a role in reducing inflammation and oxidative stress, blood pressure, and even improving our cholesterol profile."

### 6. They can help with weight management

Strawberries are one of the most guilt-free snacks going; they can satisfy a sweet craving, yet are surprisingly low in sugar and calories. "With just 6g of sugar and 33 calories per 100g, they can provide the sweet fix we desire while keeping our waistlines trim," says Soutter. "And for an even more indulgent option, try dipping strawberries into antioxidant-rich dark chocolate and coconut flakes."

### Easy ways to include more strawberries - and their tops - in your diet:

1. Add both to smoothies.
2. Make strawberry leaf tea using the stalks and leaves. Leave both to brew for a few minutes.
3. Create your own salad dressing by soaking the berries, including the tops, in balsamic vinegar for at least 48 hours.
4. Infuse your drinking water by dropping sliced strawberries and their leaves into your bottle.
5. Whizz strawberries in a blender to create a compote that can be used as a breakfast topping.





# On your bike time as pedal power arrives

THEY are the West Midlands version of Boris Bikes – and thousands of the cycles will soon be on the streets of the Black Country.

Wolverhampton is one of the first three cities to have the rental bikes. They will hit the streets of the city in September, as well as Birmingham and Coventry.

They will roll out to Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall and Solihull in 2019. Wolverhampton is also set to be one of the main bike hubs, bringing at least 50 jobs to the area, area managers, van drivers and mechanics.

The landmark initiative aims to get more people on bikes. It will be similar to London's so-called 'Boris Bikes', named after Boris Johnson. The scheme will bring 5,000 bikes to the West Midlands – 2,000 in the first roll-out and 3,000 in 2019.

## Access

Nextbike has been picked by Transport for West Midlands, part of the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA), to run bike-share, the UK's largest docked bike-share scheme outside London.

Annual membership to the scheme will cost £30 per year, meaning riders can access the bikes for as little as 8p per day. Swift card members will be able to access the bikes as part of their regular subscription.

The bikes will also be free for the first 30 minutes to people who sign up to Whim, the new smart travel service launching in the Midlands next month.

Docking stations will be located around key sites in the towns and cities involved, with bikes available 24 hours a day. The bikes have enhanced security features including integrated



Roger Lawrence and Andy Street at the bike launch

front locks and GPS tracking. The company is also looking to introduce a scheme to give up to 5,000 free memberships a year to help people who are suffering from financial deprivation.

West Midlands Mayor Andy Street, Councillor Roger Lawrence, leader of Wolverhampton Council and lead member for transport for the WMCA, were joined by managing director of nextbike, Julian Scriven, at the launch

of the scheme in Birmingham. They hope it will encourage more people to use public transport rather than drive in order to improve air quality and personal health.

Councillor Lawrence said: "I think if you look at any city in Europe they have these bike schemes. It comes at little or no cost to us because it is a commercially-managed operation. There are health benefits to it."

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# Century of learning excellence at Pelsall



Pupils dressed up as characters from books during a special literary event

## 2016 saw Pelsall Village School celebrate 100 years at the School Lane site.

For decades, pupils have been taught about their own heritage through the school's unique history and humble beginnings as a Methodist place of education at the Chapel Street location.

This time of remembrance was brought to a spectacular close at a very special festive concert in November 2016 and started a new tradition of putting on theatrical shows at Pelsall Community Centre, not just for Christmas – with The Snow Queen in 2017 – but throughout the year, the next being The Jungle Book in June, 2018.

Under the leadership of its new head teacher, Mr Bagley, Pelsall Village School still has so much to be proud of as it begins its next journey into its second century fuelled by



Nurture Group take part in a special remembrance service

## Commercial feature

the current Reading Revolution initiative as promoted in the last Pelsall Carnival where the school was awarded 2nd place.

The children always enjoy competitions such as showcasing their dance skills at Wolverhampton Grand whilst Y6 continue to present an emotional extravaganza at their Leavers Concert and Prom and is always a fantastic culmination of the children's primary educational career.

## Challenges

The school now has its new outdoor classroom surrounded by a sensory garden where children can cultivate their own crops and the magnificent grounds have recently been enhanced further by the addition of over 400 trees recently donated by the Woodlands

Trust and planted by the children and their parents. Our chickens were treated to a new coop and remain very popular members of the Pelsall Village family.

Indeed, staff are to be commended for always ensuring that the personalised creative curriculum continues to be a strength of the school.

In the last year alone it has been enhanced by the new themed Carousel days, educational visits to Trentham Gardens, Cadbury's World, Selly Manor, The Think Tank, Chester, RAF Cosford as well as theatre trips at Wolverhampton Grand, and the traditional residential weekend to PGL's Boreatton Park in Shrewsbury.

The well-established decorated Easter egg competition continues to see the school's corridors filled with an amazing array of artistic



Youngsters perform during a production of The Snow Queen at the school from 2017

set designs. Most recently the children's artwork won them the chance to take part in an amazing Aardman Animations workshop – creators of Wallace & Gromit and the current cinema hit 'Early Man'.

This was closely followed by a challenge to our Walsall Mayor – Marco Longhi and his wife to complete a KS2 Arithmetic test to help raise funds for his chosen charity and although Councillor Longhi achieved full marks, he was a super sport and allowed the children who matched his score to still 'pie face' him with squirry cream!

But it's the ethos of 'Every Child, Every Chance, Every Day' and continued proud support from parents, staff and governors, that makes Pelsall Village School such a special part of its community.

The school's prayer quotes 'to love one

another' and prides itself on helping the children become well-rounded citizens through regular local and national fundraising activities such as Acorns Hospice, Birmingham Dogs Home, Children in Need, Comic Relief, Sports Relief, and Save the Children.

We also take time for Remembrance services and the huge choir singing at Walsall Manor Hospital and Pelsall Hall, brings much festive cheer – indeed, the children proved so popular, they now read to the Pelsall Hall residents on a twice weekly basis.

With its own Nurture Groups now well-established, it's obvious that the school never forgets that its children are the true stars and giving them every opportunity to shine not only in their academic work but also across the curriculum and in daily life remains paramount and always will.

## Pelsall Village School

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### What do our carers say?

**Maria & Luke** – “If you are considering fostering I would say ‘make the call, find out more and go for it’. Fostering is hard work, but it is also one of the most rewarding careers you could ever begin to imagine. Every ounce of time and effort you put into your work will be repaid 100 times over when you see the very real and positive differences you can make to a child’s life.”

**Mandy** – “Fostering has changed my life – it’s the best thing I’ve ever done. I feel that I’m the lucky one. My three children are a gift and I really can’t imagine our home without them.”

**Steven & Nathan** – “It is the most rewarding thing we have ever done and I couldn’t imagine our life in any other way now.”

**Kuldip** – “To watch a child that is placed with you make positive steps to improve whatever issues they are trying to work through is worth all the hard work.”

**Mandy** – “I’ve always received great support, especially when I had placement difficulties. The ‘Skills to Foster’ training is excellent – it really prepares you.”

**Lucy** – “Fostering has given us a new lease of life. Our only regret is that we didn’t do it sooner!”

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Time available in your life to care for a child?

Experience or an interest in looking after children?



Walsall Council



## Why foster with Walsall....?

**We are responsible** for finding foster placements for the children in our care and we always try to place them with our own foster carers first. This means that as Walsall foster carers you are more likely to have regular placements with children in the age ranges you are skilled to work with.

**We don't make a profit** from caring for Walsall children and young people. We want the best possible placements available for our young people to grow and thrive so we invest in recruiting people who will make great foster carers to make this a reality.

**You can expect to be paid** between £200 to £600 per week for caring for children for Walsall Council, dependent on how many children you care for and your skills and expertise. Usually, you will not be paid a fee when you are not caring for a child. In addition to the fee you receive there is also an age-related allowance paid for each child in your care. We provide an additional allowance at birthdays and festival times. You can also claim fostering related mileage and expenses.

**We offer a wide and varied training programme** to help build your skills and confidence as foster carers. Introductory 'Induction Workshops' and more specialist courses such as Paediatric First Aid, Attachment, Sex & Sexuality and the 'Solihull Approach' course are available. Our training courses take place in venues in and around Walsall so will always be local and accessible. An online training programme is available too.

**Your supervising social worker is local** to you and easily reached. We have an 'out of hours' team too, so you have 24 hour support. We also work with many different professional teams to help with the children in your care such as health services and educational professionals. The introduction of Fostering Network's 'Mockingbird' project will also offer extra support to our Walsall fostering community and you may be able to join one of our Mockingbird constellations in the near future.

**We provide FREE membership to Fostering Network**, for all of our approved foster carers. Membership to the national leading fostering charity includes access to the charity's events and conferences, special discounts at leading retailers, access to legal advice & counselling and an ever growing community of fellow foster carers for support.

**We provide a Max Card**, which entitles foster carers to discounts from national venues, attractions, discounted days out and fun activities to do together.

**We have a local Foster Carers Association**, run by experienced foster carers, who offer a 24 hour telephone helpline, buddying for new carers and advice with training portfolio workshops. They also arrange many social outings for the whole fostering family.

**We value all of our foster carers** and recognise this with celebration events. We have recently recognised carers long service with visits to the Mayor's Parlour and more social and celebratory events are planned during the year.

## Mockingbird Fostering Programme

**What is it?** The Fostering Network's Mockingbird programme is an innovative method of delivering foster care using an extended family model which provides sleepovers, peer support, regular joint planning and training, and social activities. The programme improves the stability of fostering placements and strengthens the relationships between carers, children and young people, fostering services and birth families.

**How it works:** The Mockingbird programme creates a 'constellation' where one

experienced foster home offers planned and emergency sleepovers, advice, training and nearly 24/7 support to six to ten 'satellite' fostering families. The hub home carer builds strong professional relationships with their fostering service and with the support of their liaison worker is able to work proactively to prevent problems escalating or to offer crisis support to avoid placement breakdowns.

We will be establishing our first Mockingbird fostering constellation in Spring 2018, initially bringing together six to ten families. Newly

approved foster carers may be offered the opportunity to join in with a supportive Mockingbird constellation.

For more information about the Mockingbird programme please call 0800 923 3706. You can also find out more by visiting [www.thefosteringnetwork.org.uk/mockingbird](http://www.thefosteringnetwork.org.uk/mockingbird)



**Are you ready to take the next step on your fostering journey, or would you like to find out more? Come and chat with members from the fostering team at the informal drop-in sessions below. No need to book, everyone is welcome.**

**Tuesday 17th April,  
4.30pm - 6.30pm**

The Council House, Lichfield  
Street, Walsall, WS1 1UZ

**Thursday 19th April,  
10.00am - 12.00pm**

Pelsall Village Centre, High  
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# Are You a Carer

A carer is someone who, without payment, provides help and support to a friend, neighbour or relative who could not otherwise manage due to frailty illness or disability.

Carers differ in so many ways, they care for young and old, people with a physical or mental impairment. Most would not recognise themselves under the term 'carer.' They are just people trying to cope as best they can while helping to look after a loved one. They may even be juggling paid work with their unpaid caring responsibilities at home. What all carers have in common is the prime responsibility for another person's wellbeing on a very specialised and personal basis. It is important to remember though, that all carers need support, in order to maintain their own sense of identity, and they have a right to be supported by the community at large, as well as the various statutory and regulatory agencies.



**The National Carers' Strategy states that by 2018 every carer should be:**

- Recognised and supported as an expert care partner
- Enjoying a life outside caring
- Not financially disadvantaged



- Mentally and physically well; treated with dignity
- Children will be thriving, protected from inappropriate caring roles

### We are there for you

The Walsall Carers' Centre is a charitable company that brings together statutory and voluntary sector resources and expertise. Our aim is to provide real support to carers within the Borough of Walsall, and give their needs and their contributions the recognition and status they deserve. We can provide you with a 'listening ear,' someone to talk to who understands your emotional problems. Our experienced staff and support workers can help you overcome the feelings of isolation and stress. In order to do this, we have several aims, and these include:

- PROVIDING ADVOCACY AND INFORMATION FOR CARERS
- PROVIDING A HELP LINE FOR CARERS
- PROVIDING A TOWN CENTRE SUPPORT GROUP

### PROVIDING AN OUTREACH SERVICE

### PROVIDING A SUPPORT FACILITY FOR YOUNG CARERS

### Would you like to become a Trustee?

Walsall Carers Centre is an independent Registered Charity and as such is run by a Board of Trustees on a voluntary basis.

They meet 4 times a year for a couple of hours to discuss how Walsall Carers Centre has been operating and make decisions on how it is to be run in the future.

Would you like to volunteer and join our Board of Trustees and take part in how the Carers of Walsall are supported?

We would welcome your enquiry and answer any questions you may have.

**Andy Hawes**  
**01922 610810**



**ARE YOU A CARER?**  
**THEN WE ARE HERE FOR YOU!**

**HELPLINE - 01922 636663**

### HOW TO FIND YOUR CARERS CENTRE...

We are on the first floor at The Crossing at St. Paul's,  
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Open Monday - Friday 9.00am - 4.30pm  
(excluding Bank Holidays)

[www.walsallcarers.org](http://www.walsallcarers.org)

Principal Funders



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Registered Charity No. 1057348



# Waters Edge, specialist care to make you feel at home

## Commercial feature

**Waters Edge is a specialist residential care home with an established reputation for caring for elderly people including people with dementia or other progressive neurological illness.**

We are situated in a tranquil rural setting near to the village of Great Wyrley and just four miles from Walsall Town Centre and all of its amenities. Waters Edge benefits from excellent transport links and is within easy access of public transport.

At Waters Edge we specialise in providing: Residential Dementia Care; Residential Care; Respite Care. Our daily goal is to positively improve the quality of life of our residents in a safe, warm and caring environment.

Sandra Potts Care Home Manager said: "Life at our care home is all about encouraging our residents to lead as normal and as active life as they wish. Visits are really important and friends and family are welcome to drop in anytime they can."

We provide a safe and secure environment for all of our residents. Each resident has a personalised care plan which reflects their own individualised care and which is designed to suit them best. Our belief is that understanding a resident's past is critical to helping their future and our care plans reflect the most significant elements of their lives including: family, pets, interests, work and leisure.

Sandra and her team understand that a loved one's move into a care home can be a difficult time.

We try to make the move as easy as



**All efforts are made to make everyone comfortable at Waters Edge**

we can and will be happy to spend time with you planning for the move. We will also discuss with you a number of useful and practical things you may wish to consider.

We appreciate the importance of people's emotions and treasured possessions and are happy for residents to bring along any belongings which help in their transition from home to life at Waters Edge.

The daughter of our residents (LB) commented: "Waters Edge is a very pleasant home, it is like a home from home. Management and staff are friendly, caring and nothing is too much trouble. Everywhere in the home is nice and clean. The entertainment is very

good, and my dad likes to go and join in with the singing".

At Waters Edge we recognise that meal times are an important part of the day and it's an important element of care so menu choices are carefully planned to make mealtimes special. We strive to ensure that all food served is nutritious, varied and tastes great!

Residents play a key role in the decision making process of choosing what they would like to see on the menu; in fact meals and menu planning are often a lively discussion during our monthly residents meetings.

We also cater for residents with any special dietary needs or dietary requirements.

## Commercial feature

**Established in 1999, Care 2 U Ltd has been providing a successful, professional and personalised care and support service for 20 years working within adult services closely with the local authority.**

As a result, it has achieved a "GOOD" outcome across all areas from Care Quality Commission.

Care 2 U support and specialise in providing care including, sensory impairments, physical/learning disabilities, mental health and to enable people to live independently within their own homes.

Providing flexible and responsive services that are adaptable and supportive for people with dementia and those who seek end of life care support has been successfully delivered across all communities, re-abling service users to maximise their independence and maintain an active social standing within their community.

Care 2 U aspires to provide a superior care service to those members of the community who need assistance from home care support services.

A full range of domestic services such as cleaning, shopping and ironing are available to service users and other professionals.

Care 2 U staff are well-led and trained to a high level.

All staff are extremely dedicated and supportive and will get to service users no matter the weather come rain or snow you can rely on their services.

Service provision involves



**Home care support services from Care 2 U, allowing people to live independently**



**Carers are there to help out with important parts of the day, such as mealtimes**

building relationships, maintaining communication links and providing support to relatives, partners, friends, informal carers, staff and other care/health professionals to ensure the health,

social care and welfare of the individuals we support.

If you want a professional service contact the team at Care 2 U 01922 659637 [www.care2ultd.co.uk](http://www.care2ultd.co.uk)



## Waters Edge Care Home Residential and Respite Care

## 'Taking a Break?'

### Pre-booked Respite Care

**At Waters Edge Care Home we recognise how important respite care can be for both the person being cared for and the carer.**

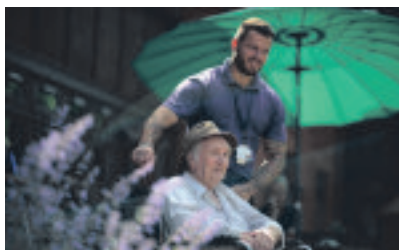
**A respite break can be a valuable experience as it is a chance for residents to meet new people, enjoy a change of scenery and try out some new activities in pleasant surroundings.**

We have dedicated respite rooms which can be pre-booked in advance for just a few days or for several weeks for older people and older people with dementia who:

- May need some extra support or emergency respite care
- May be coming out of hospital but not yet ready to go home
- Need care while their regular carer takes a well-earned break
- Are considering moving into a care home, but would like to try it first

### Why not come and visit – you will find more than a care home.

If you would like further information, to arrange a visit or to book a respite stay please contact us on **01922 404343** or by email at [info@alphacarehomes.com](mailto:info@alphacarehomes.com)



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# Supporting families from all areas in the West Midlands

## Commercial feature

**Now into their second year Jennifer Ashe and Son are continuing to support families from across the West Midlands.**

Jennifer, John and Richard are on hand to offer advice and support at what is, for many, a very traumatic time. For many funerals are a massive expense and for those who have not planned ahead they leave their loved ones often struggling to find the money.

We were determined when we opened that we would not charge expensive rates for our professional services, with this in mind Jennifer Ashe & Son's funeral fees start at just £995 for a simple funeral.

### Details

Over time we also introduced a 'Complete Package' for just £2,750, this includes the funeral director's fees, cremation costs, minister's fees, doctor's fees for cremation paperwork, orders of service, floral tributes, ashes casket or scatter tube and other finishing touches that mean families don't have to worry about the finer details.

For those families wishing to choose a burial option this can be altered to cover the costs of an interment and church fees.

Many people these days are choosing to pay for their funeral in advance, why not take advantage of the affordable plan packages, which allow you the opportunity to avoid the yearly rise in funeral costs by paying today's prices.



On hand to offer advice and support



Jennifer Ashe & Son



Affordable plan packages

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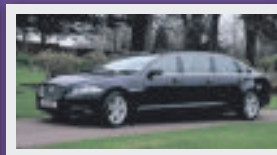
We offer four plans with the lowest starting at just £1,700, giving you peace of mind that you are removing the financial burden from your loved ones when the time comes, if this is something you are thinking about

contact us on 01543 378022 and we will be able to advise you and guide you through the process.

In line with our commitment to offering affordable funerals and being open and transparent all our prices are published in the 'Funeral Costs' section of our website; [www.jafunerals.co.uk](http://www.jafunerals.co.uk)



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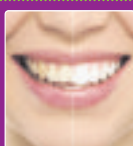
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(Monday to Friday, 9.00am to 5.00pm)

By post write to us at:

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89 Albert Embankment, London SE1 7TP

**Marie Curie Cancer Care is a UK charity  
dedicated to the care of people with terminal illnesses.**

#### Marie Curie Nurses

We are best known for our network of 2,000 Marie Curie Nurses, who work in the homes of terminally ill patients across the UK, providing practical care and support.

During 2012-13, our nurses provided more than 1.3 million hours of nursing to 30,080 patients, along with support for their families.

#### Marie Curie Hospices

Our nine Marie Curie Hospices across the UK provide expert care and the best quality of life for people with terminal illnesses.

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There are Marie Curie Hospices in Belfast, Bradford, Edinburgh,

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#### Research

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### Our funding

All our services are always free to patients and their families, thanks to the generous support of the public. We fund our nursing services and hospices in 50/50 partnership with the NHS.

## All the advertisers on these two pages are proud to support Marie Curie Cancer Care

## What do Marie Curie nurses do in your area?

We provide nursing care in partnership with the NHS. Our nursing services cover 94% of the UK's population, but the exact service we provide in each area varies according to what support the local NHS trust has decided it needs from us.

You can find out more about the care and support we offer in your area, and how to get a Marie Curie Nurse, by talking to your district nurse or GP.

Marie Curie  
Cancer Care



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# Witch way next for adventures in Oz?

**W**icked, a spectacular West End and Broadway musical that tells the incredible untold story of the Witches of Oz returns to Birmingham Hippodrome on Wednesday.

Running until April 29, it features Amy Ross as Elphaba, Helen Woolf as Glinda, Aaron Sidwell (best known as 'Steven Beale' in EastEnders) as Fiyero, Steven Pinder (best known as 'Max Farnham' in Brookside) as The Wizard & Doctor Dillamond, Kim Ismay as Madame Morrible, Emily Shaw as Nessarose and Iddon Jones as Boq. Nikki Bentley is Standby for Elphaba.

Amy is thrilled to take the lead and says playing Elphaba is a dream come true. "Well, we found out five or six months before starting rehearsals that we had the roles, so that was really a lovely amount of time to start singing the songs. Also just to build up a stamina, because once you're up and running you're doing eight shows a week. If you've already sung them into your voice and into the muscle, it makes it a lot easier once you're up and running."

It's the most challenging role that she's ever played because it stretches her both as a singer and an actress.

"As an acting role, Elphaba's journey that she goes through from start to finish is huge. You start the show hopeful, young, happy about this new university and things might be different here. And obviously, she goes through lots of hard times from start to finish and by the end is hardened by a lot of it. She's much darker by Act Two, so it does stretch you. But that's why I love it – because it is such a great challenge."

The show also brings with it enormous pressure because of the sheer number of people who go to see the show.

"Yes, I think you want to honour the wonderful, fantastically talented women who have played the role before. You want to live up to that and do it justice. So, that does add pressure but again it's something to embrace and it's a great challenge. It should never be easy."

"When I was training at college in musical theatre, Wicked had just come out on Broadway and it was this new show that everyone was listening to. We were all listening to the CD so before seeing it, I was already completely in love with it."

## EXCITING

"The score is just epic and so exciting. It was wonderful to go and see it when it came to the West End and go 'Ah, that's why she does that in that song and how that happens. I don't think there are many musical theatre actresses who wouldn't want to play Elphaba'."

People connect strongly with the show and Ross puts plenty of effort into each performance. She spends 30 minutes getting on her green make-up and enjoys being on the road.

"I've got a husband and a cat that I will miss, but what's nice is that we kind of bed down in each place for a month, sometimes six weeks, so that makes it less tiring. I've done tours before where you change every week."

The show is already the 15th longest running show in West End theatre history and is now in its 12th year at London's Apollo Victoria Theatre, where it continues an open-ended

Casting a spell – Helen Woolf plays Glinda and Amy Ross Elphaba, pictured below



run. Around the world, Wicked has been seen by almost 55 million people in 16 countries and won over 100 major awards, including ten theatregoer-voted WhatsOnStage Awards (winning 'Best West End Show' on three occasions) and two Olivier Audience Awards.

Based on the acclaimed, best-selling novel by Gregory Maguire that ingeniously re-imagines the stories and characters created by L. Frank Baum in 'The Wonderful Wizard of Oz', Wicked tells the incredible untold story of an unlikely but profound friendship between two sorcery students.

Their extraordinary adventures in Oz will ultimately see them fulfil their destinies as Glinda The Good and the Wicked Witch of the West. Acclaimed as 'a thrilling theatrical experience with brains, heart and courage', Wicked transports audiences to a stunningly re-imagined world of Oz, providing wonders beyond the imagination.

Wicked recounts the bond between two young women who first meet as sorcery students at Shiz University: the blonde and very popular Glinda and a misunderstood green girl named Elphaba.

Following an encounter with The Wizard, their friendship reaches a crossroads and their lives take very different paths. Glinda's unflinching

*The score is just epic and so exciting*

desire for popularity sees her seduced by power while Elphaba's determination to remain true to herself, and to those around her, will have unexpected and shocking consequences for her future.

Their extraordinary adventures in Oz will ultimately see them fulfil their destinies as Glinda The Good and the Wicked Witch of the West.

The show has music and lyrics by multi Grammy and Academy Award-winner Stephen Schwartz (Godspell, Disney's Pocahontas, The Hunchback of Notre Dame and Enchanted and, for DreamWorks, The Prince of Egypt) and is based on the novel 'Wicked: The Life and Times of the Wicked Witch of the West' by Gregory Maguire and adapted for the stage by Winnie Holzman (My So-Called Life). Musical staging is by Tony Award-winner Wayne Cilento and the production is directed by two-time Tony Award-winner Joe Mantello.

In London, the West End production premiered on September 27, 2006, and has played almost 5,000 performances at the Apollo Victoria Theatre. The multi record-breaking original Broadway production remains 'Broadway's biggest blockbuster' (The New York Times) after 14 years and almost 6,000 performances at the Gershwin Theatre, where it premiered on October 30, 2003.

● For more entertainment news and reviews see The Ticket in your Express & Star every Friday.

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The Vaccines



## Vaccines bounce back after band came to blows

The Vaccines are back with their fourth album, *Combat Sports*, and a gig in Birmingham as part of their spring UK tour.

The five-piece from London promise full-throttle rock and roll on *Combat Sports*, released tomorrow (Friday). Heralded by new single *I Can't Quit*, *Combat Sports* is described by the band as a return to their guitar band roots after a flirtation with pop.

By the time the band had ended their campaign for third album *English Graffiti* they were in a mess due to lifestyle and health issues and, crucially, being in a band had stopped being fun.

Despite English Graffiti getting glowing reviews and reaching no2 in the UK chart, the band were at their lowest ebb, maybe pondering the question posed by the title of their debut in 2011, *What Did You Expect from the Vaccines?*

"We lost sight of who we were and why we were there," says singer and guitarist Justin Young.

The 30-year-old originally from Hampshire explains that the band has survived upheaval, including the departure of drummer Pete Robertson.

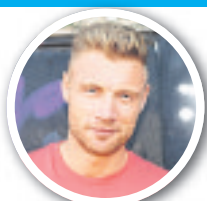
"Being in a band is about compromise and collaboration. It's coming to terms with what we are as a collective and falling back in love with that and making the best record we can for us as a band, rather than as individuals."

The core trio, also featuring lead guitarist Freddie Cowan and bassist Arni Arnason, are now joined by drummer Yoann Intonti and keyboardist Tim Lanham.

The album's title was thought of after Young and Cowan came to blows on the last day of recording. "We're like brothers and brothers fight," says Young. "I don't see the title as a negative. On the contrary, to me it embodies survival, strength, commitment, glory, winning."

The Vaccines are in concert at the O2 Academy in Birmingham next Saturday, April 7.

## Freddie is bowled over by a musical



When Freddie Flintoff retired from cricket, few people imagined that he would be performing in a musical.

It seems even he's slightly surprised to have landed a role in Kay Mellor's musical *Fat Friends*. He got the part after guest starring in an episode of the writer's recent TV drama series *Love, Lies and Records*, but admitted that he was initially a bit daunted at the

prospect of belting out a tune on stage. But the reviews have been very positive.

Freddie, pictured, will be taking to the stage alongside Atomic Kitten singer Natasha Hamilton, West End star Jodie Prenger, The X Factor winner Sam Bailey and Coronation Street's Kevin Kennedy.

The show has been written and directed by Kay Mellor, who after writing for *Coronation Street* and *Brookside* went on to create such

hit dramas as *Band of Gold*, *Playing the Field*, *A Passionate Woman*, *The Syndicate*, *In the Club* and, of course, *Fat Friends*.

The music is by Nick Lloyd Webber, son of Sir Andrew, who has created musical scores for film, TV and the stage, including the music for *Love Lies and Records*.

The tour arrives in Birmingham next week, at the New Alexandra Theatre from Tuesday to Saturday.

## Mars rocks up for arena show

Thirty Seconds To Mars are at the city centre Arena Birmingham tonight (Thursday). The Los Angeles band fronted by rocker and movie star Jared Leto, pictured, have sold more than 15 million albums worldwide and release fifth studio album, *America*, in April.



Sam Smith is at the Genting Arena on Tuesday and Wednesday.

Embrace are back with seventh album, *Love Is A Basic Need*, 20 years on from their debut, and a gig at the O2 Institute in Digbeth next Thursday.

## Sweet soul music and sounds like Sabbath

How Sweet It Is for soul fans with a Motown tribute show of that title at Wolverhampton's Grand Theatre on Saturday and then a triple bill at Birmingham's New Alexandra Theatre on Sunday featuring those native New Yorkers *Odyssey*, Rose Royce's Gwen Dickey and Brum's own Jaki Graham. Meanwhile, the songs of John Fogerty will be heard at Bilston's Robin 2 tonight when tribute band Creedence Clearwater Review hit the stage. Tomorrow (Friday) Legend, the Bob Marley Experience, bring classic reggae to the Mount Pleasant venue. Also at The Robin, Kick Up The 80s play Saturday and the sounds of 'Madchester' will be aired by Stone Roses tribute Adored and Oasis tribute Definitely Maybe on Sunday. Forever Sabbath pay homage to Ozzy and co at the Robin on Wednesday.



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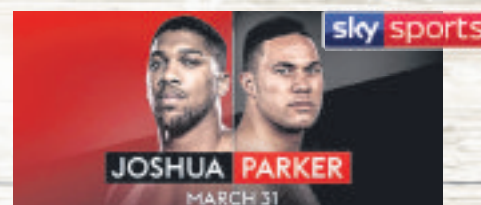
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CHOICE



Andrew Scott

**Hamlet**  
(BBC2, 9pm)  
The Almeida Theatre's 2017 acclaimed production of Shakespeare's play, recorded as-live in its West End transfer on the stage of London's Harold Pinter Theatre. Andrew Scott plays the Prince in Robert Icke's production, which features the original cast, and is directed for the screen by Rhodri Huw, also starring Jessica Brown Findlay, Angus Wright, Juliet Stevenson, Luke Thompson, Maanuv Thiara, Peter Wight, David Rintoul, Calum Finlay, Joshua Higgott, Marty Cruickshank, Madeline Appiah, Daniel Rabin, Matthew Wynn, Barry Aird, Mark Desebrock, Penelope McGhie and Nneka Okoye.

BBC1

**6.00** Breakfast. **10.00** Saturday Kitchen Live. **11.30** Classic Mary Berry. (R) **12.00** Football Focus. **1.00** BBC News; Weather. **1.15** Regional Programme. **2.00** MasterChef. (R) **2.30** MasterChef. (R) **3.00** Film: Shrek Forever After. (2010) Animated comedy, with the voice of Mike Myers. **4.25** Final Score. **5.15** A Question of Sport. (R) **5.45** Doodlebugs. **6.00** **Ready or Not.** New series. Comedy game show featuring unsuspecting members of the public who face surprise challenges while going about their daily lives. Paddy McGuinness provides the commentary. **6.30** BBC News. **6.40** Regional Programme. **6.45** **Pointless Celebrities.** A World Champions edition of the quiz, featuring Steve Davis, Sarah Ayton, Trina Gulliver, Eric Bristow, Kriss Akabusi, John Regis, Steve Collins and Jayne Torvill. **7.35** **Who Dares Wins.** Nick Knowles hosts the game show in which two pairs of complete strangers team up, each battling to outdo the other by listing as much as they know about a given subject. **8.20** **Casualty.** Glen and Robyn are both rushed to the ED, where he finally tells her the truth about his seizures. Bea grows concerned that Dylan's alcoholism may be affecting his judgement. **9.10** **Troy: Fall of a City.** King Priam takes his life into his hands to visit the Greek camp and Achilles. An agreement is reached, but the Greeks are furious – will the truce hold? Meanwhile, Xanthius' arrest puts increasing pressure on Helen, who faces a personal crisis as her relationship with Paris becomes strained. The penultimate episode of David Farr's Ancient Greek adventure, retelling the legend of the Trojan War from the perspective of a family at the heart of the conflict. Starring David Threlfall, David Gyasi, Bella Dwyne and Louis Hunter. **10.10** BBC News; Weather; National Lottery Update. **10.30** **Match of the Day.** Gary Lineker presents highlights of the latest Premier League matches, including Everton v Manchester City at Goodison Park. **12.00** Film: Forget Me Not. (2011) **1.30** Weather for the Week Ahead. **1.35** BBC News.

BBC2

**6.10** The Wonder of Animals. (R) **6.40** Naomi's Nightmares of Nature. (R) **7.10** The Pets Factor. **7.30** The Designers. **8.00** Absolute Genius: Monster Builds. **8.30** Beyond Bionic. **9.00** Robot Wars. (R) **10.00** Gordon Buchanan: Elephant Family & Me. (R) **11.00** Six Puppies and Us. (R) **12.00** The Ladykillers: Pest Detectives. (R) **1.00** Film: Cromwell. (1970) Historical drama, starring Richard Harris and Alec Guinness. **3.15** Canterbury Cathedral. (R) **4.15** The Secret Helpers. (R) **5.15** Big Cats About the House. (R) **6.15** **Easter from King's.** A selection of music and Gospel readings for Holy Week and Easter, as part of a week of celebrations held at the Chapel of King's College, Cambridge. The King's College Choir, directed by Stephen Cleobury, sings a variety of popular seasonal choral verses, including Were You There?, Greater Love Hath No Man, Wash Me Thoroughly, The Angel Rolled the Stone Away and Worthy is the Lamb. **7.30** **Dad's Army.** Sergeant Wilson inherits a title following the death of an elderly relative and joins the aristocracy – much to Mainwaring's annoyance. Classic comedy first aired in 1973, starring John Le Mesurier and Arthur Lowe. (R) **8.00** **Attenborough's Wonder of Eggs.** David Attenborough has a passion for birds' eggs, which protect the young from the outside world at the same time as allowing them to breathe and are strong enough to withstand the full weight of an incubating parent and weak enough to allow a chick to break free. In this documentary, the broadcaster reveals the secrets of birds' eggs from creation to hatching, exploring how they are made, the reasons behind their shape and their intrinsic purpose. **9.00** **Hamlet.** The Almeida Theatre's 2017 production of Shakespeare's play, starring Andrew Scott, and recorded as-live in its West End transfer on the stage of London's Harold Pinter Theatre. **12.15** Civilisations. (R) **1.15** Film: Therese Desqueyroux. (2012) An outspoken woman feels stifled in an unhappy marriage in 1920s France, and is driven to consider poisoning her husband. Drama, with Audrey Tautou. **3.00** This Is BBC Two.

ITV

**6.00** CITV: Sooty. **6.10** Grizzly Tales for Gruesome Kids. (R) **6.20** Grizzly Tales for Gruesome Kids. (R) **6.35** Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures. (R) **6.50** Super 4. (R) **7.00** Signed Stories: Share a Story. (R) **7.05** Star Wars Freemaker Adventures. (R) **7.30** Scrambled!: Scrambled! **7.35** Scrambled!: The Tom and Jerry Show. (R) **7.50** Scrambled!: The Powerpuff Girls. (R) **8.10** Scrambled!: The Bagel and Becky Show. (R) **8.30** Scrambled!: Thunderbirds Are Go. **9.05** Scrambled!: Wishfart. (R) **9.25** ITV News. **9.30** James Martin's Saturday Morning. **11.25** Who's Doing the Dishes? (R) **12.25** ITV News; Weather. **12.30** The Harbour. (R) **1.00** Best Walks with a View with Julia Bradbury. (R) **1.30** Britain's Brightest Family. (R) **2.00** Celebrity Catchphrase. (R) **3.00** Tenable. (R) **4.00** Tipping Point. (R) **5.00** The Chase. (R) **6.00** ITV News; Weather. **6.15** **Regional Programme;** Weather. **6.30** **New You've Been Framed!** Harry Hill narrates a comical selection of mishaps filmed by viewers. **7.00** **Ant & Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway.** Stephen Merchant is on duty as the Star Guest Announcer, and Stephen Mulhern hits the streets of Warrington for the latest round of In for a Penny. Plus, Paloma Faith takes to the stage in the End of the Show Show and the Script are in the studio for Singalong Live. There will also be plenty of surprises as more Places on the Plane are given away, and another lucky player gets the chance to Win the Ads. Presented by Declan Donnelly. **8.30** **The Voice UK.** Emma Willis hosts the live semi-final of the singing contest, as the eight remaining contestants compete to win one of the four places in next week's grand finale. Only four acts can progress to the final and for the first time in the series, the decision of which acts will go through to the next round and which will be eliminated rests entirely with the votes of the viewing public. Members of Team Oily, Team JHud, Team Will and Team Tom look to move one step closer to winning a recording contract with Polydor Records. **10.00** ITV News; Weather. **10.15** Film: **The Bourne Identity.** (2002) Thriller, starring Matt Damon. **12.20** Goodwood Members Meeting Highlights. **1.10** Jackpot247. **3.00** Babushka. (R) **3.50** ITV Nightscreen.

CHANNEL 4

**6.10** Marathon: Maraton del Meridiano. **6.40** Triathlon: Challenge Wanaka. **7.05** The King of Queens. (R) **7.30** The King of Queens. (R) **7.55** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.20** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.50** Frasier. (R) **9.20** Frasier. (R) **9.55** Frasier. (R) **10.25** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **10.55** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **11.20** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **11.50** The Simpsons. (R) **12.20** The Simpsons. (R) **12.50** The Simpsons. (R) **1.20** Come Dine with Me. (R) **2.20** Coast vs Country. (R) **3.25** A Place in the Sun: Winter Sun. (R) **4.25** A Place in the Sun: Winter Sun. (R) **5.30** The Secret Life of the Zoo. (R) **6.30** **Channel 4 News.** **7.00** **Coastal Railways with Julie Walters.** The actress travels from Newcastle to Edinburgh by high speed train. Along the way, she stops off at the coastal town of Alnmouth, discovers where the phrase Keep Calm and Carry On originated, visits the world's biggest gannet colony, and goes out to sea with a lobster breeder. When she reaches her destination, she discovers the connection between the railway and the famous Balmoral Hotel. (R) **8.00** **Britain at Low Tide.** In Fife, Tori Herridge explores a wreck close to the scene of one of Britain's worst railway disasters, and assesses the role it played in the rescue operation. A series of holes in rocks on the foreshore lead Tori and the archaeologists to the story of an industry that once dominated the local shoreline, and depended wholly on the power of the sea. She also examines stone carvings left in caves by one of Scotland's oldest tribes. Last in the series. **9.00** **Film: Taken 3.** (2014) Ex-CIA agent Bryan Mills' efforts to finally live a quiet life are shattered by the death of his ex-wife. Just when things seemingly can't get any worse, he is framed for her murder and must fight to clear his name. Action thriller sequel, starring Liam Neeson, Forest Whitaker and Maggie Grace. **11.10** Film: **AVP: Alien vs Predator.** (2004) Scientists are caught up in a battle between two races of deadly extraterrestrial creatures in a mysterious pyramid. Sci-fi thriller, starring Sanaa Lathan. **1.00** Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA. (R) **1.45** Hollywoods. (R) **3.55** The Question Jury. (R)

CHANNEL 5

**6.00** Milkshake! **10.10** Film: Gone with the Wind. (1939) **2.30** Film: Oklahoma! (1955) Rodgers and Hammerstein's musical Western, with Gordon MacRae. **4.00** 5 News Update. **4.05** Film: Oklahoma! (1955) Concluded. **5.15** Can't Pay? We'll Take It Away. (R) **6.15** **Can't Pay? We'll Take It Away: Final Demand.** Documentary giving an insight into the world of debt collection from the perspectives of people who owe money, their creditors and those who collect the payments. **7.00** **Cruising with Jane McDonald.** The singer returns to Naples in southern Italy, from where takes a ferry to Capri, an island famed for its rugged landscape, upmarket hotels – and shopping experience. Here, Jane wishes to fulfil an ambition she has had all her life – to follow in the footsteps of English actress, singer and comedian Gracie Fields, once the biggest star in the UK, who spent the years leading to her death in 1979 living in the region. It proves to be a poignant journey that comes to rest at Gracie's graveside. (R) **8.00** **Inside Windsor Castle.** A look back at the series of events that shaped the monarchy between 1936 and 1952, using dramatic reconstructions and an extraordinary archive of film. Edward VIII's abdication in 1936 meant that his brother 'Bertie' became King George VI, and his eldest daughter Elizabeth was now suddenly and unexpectedly heir to the throne. When the Second World War broke out, Elizabeth and her sister Margaret moved into the safe haven that was Windsor Castle, which Elizabeth loved for its history and its heritage, while for Margaret it was one big adventure playground. (R) **8.55** **5 News Weekend.** **9.00** **Most Shocking Sexist TV of All Time.** Through archive footage and talking heads, a look at how gender politics has played out on television from the 1960s to the present day. **10.30** **20 Moments That Rocked the 80s.** Cherie Lunghi presents a countdown of memorable moments. (R) **12.05** SuperCasino. **3.10** Inside Manchester's Midland Hotel. (R) **4.00** The X-Files. (R) **4.45** House Doctor. (R)

DIGITAL

**BBC Four**  
**7.00** Lost Kingdoms of Central America **8.00** The Silk Road **9.00** Below the Surface **10.30** Top of the Pops: 1985 **11.30** The Highwaymen: Friends Till the End **12.25** The Highwaymen Live **2.25** Lost Kingdoms of Central America **3.25** Top of the Pops: 1985 **3.55** Sounds of the Seventies – Solo **4.00** Close  
**ITV2**  
**11.55** Celebrity Catchphrase **12.55** You've Been Framed! Gold **1.55** Film: The Flintstones in Viva Rock Vegas (2000) **2.55** FYI Daily **3.00** Film: The Flintstones in Viva Rock Vegas (2000) **3.40** Film: Nanny McPhee (2005) **4.40** FYI Daily **4.45** Film: Nanny McPhee (2005) **5.45** Film: Mr Bean's Holiday (2007) **6.45** FYI Daily **6.50** Film: Mr Bean's Holiday (2007) **7.30** Film: Skyfall (2012) **8.35** FYI Daily **8.40** Film: Skyfall (2012) **10.15** Celebrity Juice: Easter Special **11.05** Family Guy **12.05** American Dad! **1.05** Action Team **1.35** Release the Hounds **2.35** Totally Bonkers Guinness World Records **2.45** Teleshopping **5.45** ITV2 Nightscreen  
**ITV3**  
**12.20** Film: Carry On Cruising (1962) **2.05** Film: Carry On Up the Khyber (1968) **3.55** Carry On Forever **7.00** Midsomer Murders **11.00** Vera **1.00** Carry On Forever **2.00** ITV3 Nightscreen **2.30** Teleshopping  
**ITV4**  
**12.25** The Big Fish Off **1.30** ITV Racing Live from Musselburgh. **4.00** Film: Dunkirk (1958) **5.10** FYI Daily **5.15** Film: Dunkirk (1958) **6.45** Film: Aces High (1976) **7.45** FYI Daily **7.50** Film: Aces High (1976) **9.00** Film: Lethal Weapon (1987) **10.05** FYI Daily **10.10** Film: Lethal Weapon (1987) **11.10** Film: Fire Down Below (1997) **12.10** FYI Daily **12.15** Film: Fire Down Below (1997) **1.20** River Monsters **2.20** The Protectors **E4**  
**1.00** Young Sheldon **1.30** The Big Bang Theory **4.00** The Great Celebrity Bake Off for Stand Up to Cancer **5.15** Extreme Cake Makers **6.00** The Big Bang Theory **9.00** Film: The Watch (2012) **11.00** Gogglebox **12.00** Naked Attraction **1.05** Five Star Hotel **4.00** How I Met Your Mother **4.45** Rude(ish) Tube  
**Film4**  
**11.00** The Indian in the Cupboard (1995) **1.00** The SpongeBob SquarePants Movie (2004) **2.45** Robots (2005) **4.30** The Princess Diaries (2001) **6.45** Back to the Future (1985) **9.00** Conan the Barbarian (2011) **11.10** Veteran (2015) **1.40** Ninja III: The Domination (1984) **3.45** Close

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CHOICE



**Ordeal by Innocence (BBC1, 9pm)** New series. Three-part adaptation of Agatha Christie's novel, starring Bill Nighy. The former husband of a murdered heiress prepares to remarry 18 months after her adopted son was convicted of killing her, before dying himself in a prison brawl. However, the wedding preparations are disrupted by the arrival of a mysterious scientist who has returned from an expedition to the Arctic - and who claims to be able to prove the supposed murderer is innocent. Anthony Boyle, Anna Chancellor, Morven Christie, Crystal Clarke, Christian Cooke, Alice Eve, Matthew Goode, Ella Purnell, Eleanor Tomlinson, Luke Treadaway, Brian McCordie, Luke Murray, Hayden Robertson, Catriona Macnicoll and Abigail Conteh also star.

BBC1

**6.00 Breakfast. 7.25 Match of the Day.** (R) **9.00** Painting the Holy Land. **10.00** Easter Day From Sheffield Cathedral. **11.00** Urti et Orbi. **11.25 Film:** The Silent Child. (2017) **11.45** Bargain Hunt. (R) **12.25** BBC News; Weather. **12.40 Film:** Shaun the Sheep Movie. (2015) Animation, featuring the voice of Justin Fletcher. **2.00** MasterChef. (R) **3.00** MasterChef. (R) **4.00** MasterChef. (R) **4.30** Escape to the Country. (R) **5.00** Songs of Praise. **5.35** BBC News. **5.50** Regional Programme. **6.00 The Big Painting Challenge.** New series. Mariella Frostrup and Rev Richard Coles present a third series of the art contest, which begins with 10 contestants getting a masterclass in still life in Glasgow. The painters must each depict an object they have brought with them from home, before visiting a distillery to produce a large scale painting of the stills and fermenters. The finished art is displayed to members of the public, who get the chance to vote for their favourite, before Judges Lachlan Goudie and Daphne Todd decide who will be the first to be eliminated. **7.00 Countryfile.** Matt Baker, Anita Rani and Joe Crowley explore West Yorkshire, meeting a beekeeper who came to the county as a refugee and discovering Emily Bronte's passion for wildlife. Including Weather for the Week Ahead. **8.00 The Generation Game.** Mel Giedroyc and Sue Perkins host the first of two special episodes reviving the classic game show in which teams of family members compete in bizarre challenges. **9.00 Ordeal by Innocence.** New series. Three-part adaptation of Agatha Christie's novel. As the widower of a murdered heiress prepares to remarry, the identity of his wife's killer is called into question. **10.00 BBC News.** **10.20 Regional Programme.** **10.30 Match of the Day 2.** Mark Chapman reviews the day's Premier League action, with highlights of Chelsea v Tottenham Hotspur at Stamford Bridge and Arsenal v Stoke City at the Emirates Stadium. **11.30 The Women's Football Show.** **12.05** Weather for the Week Ahead. **12.10** BBC News.

BBC2

**6.20** Coast. (R) **6.50** Glorious Gardens from Above. (R) **7.35** Life in a Cottage Garden with Carol Klein. (R) **8.05** Gardeners' World. (R) **8.35** Countryfile. (R) **9.30** Saturday Kitchen Best Bites. **11.00** Spring Kitchen with Tom Kerridge. (R) **11.45** Lorraine Pascale: How to Be a Better Cook. (R) **12.15** MOTD2 Extra. **1.00** Coast. (R) **1.15** Pilgrimage: The Road to Santiago. (R) **2.15** Canterbury Cathedral. (R) **3.15** RAF at 100 with Ewan and Colin McGregor. (R) **4.45 Film:** War Horse. (2011) First World War drama, starring Jeremy Irvine. **7.00 Down the Mighty River with Steve Backshall.** In the conclusion of the two-part programme, the naturalist travels down the Ballem River's lower gorge, one of the most dangerous stretches of white water in the world surrounded by jagged rock walls. His exploration of the surrounding jungle leads to an encounter with a tribe that has had little contact with the outside world. As he concludes his trek in the river's coastal reaches, he faces a crisis of conscience as he witnesses a traditional crocodile hunt. (R) **8.00 Top Gear.** Matt LeBlanc, Chris Harris and Rory Reid test drive the latest SUVs through the medium of horse trialling, and are joined in the studio by Jason Manford. Plus, Chris takes an explosive drive in the new Alpines A110. Last in the series. **9.00 Conspiracy Files: Murder in Washington.** The murder of political campaigner Seth Rich during the 2016 US presidential campaign, which has become the subject of rumours that he had released internal e-mails to Wikileaks. **10.00 Mock the Week.** Ed Gamble, Milton Jones, Miles Jupp, Nish Kumar and Felicity Ward join host Dara O Briain and regular Hugh Dennis for the topical comedy show. (R) **10.35 Top Gear: Extra Gear.** The team try and solve Tokyo's transport problems, and are joined by racing drivers Enaam Ahmed and Chris Breen for a chat about the Monte Carlo Rally. Last in the series. **11.00 Film: Selma.** (2014) Fact-based drama, starring David Oyelowo. **1.00** Sign Zone: Countryfile. (R) **1.55** Holby City. (R) **2.55** This Is BBC Two.

ITV

**6.00** CITV: Sooty. **6.10** Grizzly Tales for Gruesome Kids. (R) **6.20** Grizzly Tales for Gruesome Kids. (R) **6.35** Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures. (R) **6.50** Super 4. (R) **7.00** Signed Stories: Share a Story. (R) **7.05** Thunderbirds Are Go. (R) **7.30** Scrambled!: Scrambled! **7.35** Scrambled!: The Tom and Jerry Show. (R) **7.50** Scrambled!: Teen Titans Go! (R) **8.10** Scrambled!: Mr Bean: The Animated Series. (R) **8.30** Scrambled!: Spy School. **9.05** Scrambled!: Adventure Time. (R) **9.25** ITV News. **9.30** Love Your Garden. (R) **10.00** Countrywise. (R) **10.30** The Voice UK. (R) **12.00** Ant & Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway. (R) **1.30** ITV News; Weather. **1.40 Film:** Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory. (1971) Musical fantasy, with Gene Wilder. **3.45** Catchphrase. (R) **4.30** ITV News; Weather. **4.45** Real Deal Programme; Weather. **5.00** Tipping Point. (R) **6.00 The Chase: Celebrity Special.** TV presenters Fiona Bruce, Rick Edwards, Kate Humble and Joe Swash pit their general knowledge against a trivia expert as they try to win thousands of pounds for charity. However, they must work as a team to build their prize pot and stay one step ahead of the Chaser. Bradley Walsh hosts. (R) **7.00 Change Your Tune.** New series. Baz Ashmawh hosts the musical challenge in which some of the country's worst singers perform live, then undergo weeks of training to improve their voices, with the contestant who makes the most progress winning £10,000. The first episode features a teacher who wants to be good enough to join the school choir, an amateur actor who has stage presence but not musical skill, a care worker who wants to be able to sing at her daughter's wedding, a HGV driver who sings while driving around the country, and a music lover who has a hard time staying in tune. **8.00 The Durrells.** Larry and Louisa return to England, where Larry falls in with a group of Bohemian artists living in London, including writer Henry Miller. Back in Corfu, Gerry saves a donkey. **9.00 The Good Karma Hospital.** Gabriel joins Ruby on an outreach programme to a tea plantation. **10.00** ITV News; Weather. **10.15** Film: Sherlock Holmes. (2009) **12.40** Marcella. (R) **1.30** Jackpot247. **3.00** Take on the Twisters. (R)

CHANNEL 4

**6.15** The King of Queens. (R) **6.40** The King of Queens. (R) **7.05** The King of Queens. (R) **7.30** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **7.55** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.30** Frasier. (R) **9.00** Frasier. (R) **9.30** Sunday Brunch. **12.30** Jamie and Jimmy's Friday Night Feast. (R) **1.35** The Simpsons. (R) **2.00** The Simpsons. (R) **2.30** The Simpsons. (R) **3.00** The Simpsons. (R) **3.30** Ice Age: The Great Egg-Scapade. (R) **4.00 Film:** Dumbo. (1941) Disney animated adventure, with the voice of Edward Brophy. **5.15** The Great Celebrity Bake Off for Stand Up to Cancer. (R) **6.30 Channel 4 News.** **7.00 Homes by the Med.** Charlie Luxton visits the Spanish island of Mallorca, where he discovers an Arab bath house that is over 1,000 years old in Palma's old town. (R) **8.00 Escape to the Chateau.** As Dick and Angel prepare for winter, they attend a food festival in Rouen, where they hope to find inspiration over what to do with their fresh fruit and vegetables. Angel adds the finishing touches to the floating geodesic dome in time for a family sleepover, while Dick gets to work fixing the crumbling stucco. Last in the series. **9.00 Homeland.** Carrie makes a move, Wellington has a reckoning and Saul expands an operation. Espionage drama, starring Claire Danes, Mandy Patinkin and Linus Roache. **10.05 Film: The Green Mile.** (1999) A prison guard amazed by the healing power and gentle nature of a man on death row comes to doubt his guilt. Supernatural drama, starring Tom Hanks and Michael Clarke Duncan. **1.25** The Supertvet. Professor Noel Fitzpatrick and his team fight to save the leg of a much-loved golden retriever, and a French bulldog with twisted elbows needs a wheelchair and some surgery. (R) **2.20** Coastal Walks with My Dog. The first of two programmes in which celebrities and their canine companions showcase Britain's coastal beauty spots, beginning with trips in North Devon, Pembrokeshire and Dorset. (R) **3.15** KOTV Boxing Weekly. Action from two bouts featuring Reece Bellotti and Philip Bowes. **3.40** The Question Jury. An opinionated new juror arrives. (R) **4.35** George Clarke's Amazing Spaces. A school teacher building a classroom inside a salvaged plane. (R) **5.30** Streetmate. (R)

CHANNEL 5

**6.00** Milkshake!: Little Princess. **6.10** Milkshake! Monkey. (R) **6.15** The Secret Life of Puppies. (R) **6.20** Moly. (R) **6.25** Simon. (R) **6.35** Simon. (R) **6.40** Peppa Pig. (R) **6.45** Oily the Little White Van. (R) **6.55** Blaze and the Monster Machines. (R) **7.15** Paw Patrol. (R) **7.30** Noddy: Toyland Detective. (R) **7.45** Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom. (R) **8.00** Shimmer and Shine. (R) **8.10** Digby Dragon. (R) **8.20** Peppa Pig. (R) **8.40** Peppa Pig. (R) **8.45** Thomas & Friends: Journey Beyond Sodor. (R) **10.05** Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. (R) **10.35** Police Interceptors. (R) **11.40** Police Interceptors. (R) **12.40** Film: Joe Kidd. (1972) Western, starring Clint Eastwood. **2.25 Film:** Space Cowboys. (2000) Adventure, starring Clint Eastwood. **4.55 Film:** Stargate. (1994) Sci-fi adventure, starring Kurt Russell. **5.55** 5 News Update. **6.00 Film: Stargate.** (1994) Concluded. **7.10 Can't Pay? We'll Take It Away.** The officers try to recover £13,000 owed by a high-performance car dealer in Birmingham, and in Wolverhampton the agents chase nearly £2,000 owed to a car hire company. (R) **8.00 Can't Pay? We'll Take It Away.** The agents chase up a £3,000 deposit owed by a landlord to his tenant, and officers try to recover £25,000 from a nightclub owner for unpaid solicitor fees. (R) **8.55 5 News Weekend.** **9.00 Film: Bruce Almighty.** (2003) God tires of a down-on-his-luck reporter's constant complaining, so passes on His powers to give him a taste of ultimate responsibility. The newsman falls in love with his extraordinary abilities - but a never-ending stream of incoming prayers and his ambitious attempt to please everyone soon prove there is more to the job than meets the eye. Comedy, starring Jim Carrey. **10.00 5 News Update.** **10.05 Film: Bruce Almighty.** (2003) Concluded. **11.05 Film: Just Go with It.** (2011) A plastic surgeon pretends to be pursuing a divorce and persuades his assistant to pose as his soon-to-be ex-wife. Romantic comedy, starring Adam Sandler. **1.15** SuperCasino. **3.10** Inside Manchester's Midland Hotel. (R) **4.00** The Railways That Built Britain with Chris Tarrant. (R) **4.45** House Doctor. (R)

DIGITAL

**BBC Four** **7.00** Only Connect **7.30** University Challenge **8.00** Painting the Holy Land **9.00** Timewatch: WWI Aces Falling **10.00** The Battle of Britain **11.40** Operation Jericho **12.40** Dancing in the Blitz: How World War Two Made British Ballet **1.40** Revolution and Romance: Musical Masters of the 19th Century **2.40** Timewatch: WWI Aces Falling **3.40** Close **ITV2** **12.15** The Voice UK **1.55** Britain's Got Talent: Top 10 Golden Buzzer **2.55** Film: Happy Feet Two (2011) **3.55** FYI Daily **4.00** Film: Happy Feet Two (2011) **4.50** Film: Hop (2011) **5.50** FYI Daily **5.55** Film: Hop (2011) **6.45** Film: Charlie and the Chocolate Factory (2005) **7.50** FYI Daily **7.55** Film: Charlie and the Chocolate Factory (2005) **9.00** Film: Spectre (2015) **10.10** FYI Daily **10.05** Film: Spectre (2015) **11.55** Family Guy **1.20** American Dad! **2.15** Totally Bonkers Guinness World Records **2.30** Teleshopping **ITV3** **11.10** Film: Carry On Cowboy (1966) **1.10** Film: Carry On Behind (1975) **3.10** Film: Carry On Camping (1969) **4.55** Midsomer Murders **6.55** Vera **9.00** Larry Grayson: Shut That Door! (2007) **11.00** Film: Are You Being Served? (1977) **1.00** Blue Murder **2.30** Carry On Forever **4.10** Road to Avonlea **5.55** ITV3 Nightscreen **ITV4** **12.20** When English Football Ruled Europe **2.20** Stuck on You: The Football Sticker Story **3.25** Film: Police Academy 2: Their First Assignment (1985) **4.25** FYI Daily **4.30** Film: Police Academy 2: Their First Assignment (1985) **5.10** Goodwood Members Meeting **6.10** The Big Fish Off **7.15** Film: The Scorpion King (2002) **8.15** FYI Daily **8.20** Film: The Scorpion King (2002) **9.00** Film: Jaws (1975) **10.05** FYI Daily **10.10** Film: Jaws (1975) **11.25** Film: The Assassination of Jesse James by the Coward Robert Ford (2007) **12.25** FYI Daily **12.30** Film: The Assassination of Jesse James by the Coward Robert Ford (2007) **2.35** Football Rivalries **2.50** ITV4 Nightscreen **E4** **12.25** Film: Dragonball Evolution (2009) **2.00** The Big Bang Theory **5.00** The Goldbergs **5.30** Brooklyn Nine-Nine **6.00** Young Sheldon **6.30** The Big Bang Theory **6.55** Film: Eragon (2006) **9.00** Marvel's Agents of SHIELD **10.00** The Inbetweeners **11.05** The Big Bang Theory **12.00** Five Star Hotel: The Finale **2.05** The Inbetweeners **2.35** Marvel's Agents of SHIELD

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FILM CHOICES

MONDAY

**Z for Zachariah, BBC2, 10.30pm**

A woman lives alone on a farm that belonged to her family in the aftermath of a nuclear apocalypse, believing herself to be the last survivor of the human race. Her simple life is disrupted by the appearance of a second survivor, and they adapt to working together - but the arrival of a third individual threatens everything they have built. Sci-fi drama based on Robert C O'Brien's novel, starring Margo Robbie, Chiwetel Ejiofor and Chris Pine. (2015)

TUESDAY

**Sabotage, Channel 5, 10pm**

The members of an elite Drug Enforcement Administration team secretly keep the millions of dollars they find during the raid. When they are killed off one by one, the leader becomes convinced one of his men is getting rid of the others to keep all the money, and sets out to expose the murderer. Action thriller, starring Arnold Schwarzenegger. (2014)



Hellboy II: The Golden Army, Friday, ITV, 10.45pm

WEDNESDAY

**First Class Fear, Channel 5, 3.15pm**

After being left at the altar, a woman has a brief affair with a handsome stranger on a plane, which ultimately puts her and everyone else on the flight in danger. Thriller, starring Lacey Chabert. (2013)

THURSDAY

**3 Days to Kill, Channel 5, 11.05pm**

A CIA agent learns he is dying, and decides to quit the agency so he can spend his last few months trying to rebuild his relationship with his estranged daughter. He is tempted to go back on his word when an old colleague offers him an experimental drug that could save his life - if he agrees to carry out one last mission. Action thriller, starring Kevin Costner. (2014)

FRIDAY

**Hellboy II: The Golden Army, ITV, 10.45pm**

The demon superhero, aided by a team from the Bureau of Paranormal Research and Defence, leads the fight against renegade elf Prince Nuada who is intent on reawakening an unstoppable robot army and bringing about the demise of mankind. Action fantasy sequel, starring Ron Perlman. (2008)

# A group of famous faces live the dream in Nevada

**H**ave you heard the one about the British showbiz legends trying to make it in Las Vegas?

This new five-part series follows famous faces from comedy, music and variety from the 1960s, 70s and 80s as they head to the Entertainment Capital of the World with a chance to fulfil the dream they thought had long gone.

The eight stars are double act Cannon & Ball, entertainer Bernie Clifton, comedian Mick Miller, pianist and entertainer Bobby Crush, singer Kenny Lynch, 60s pop idol Jess Conrad, actress and singer Anita Harris and Hi-de-Hi! actress Su Pollard.

Cameras follow the group from their departure from the UK to the moment they step onto the stage in Sin City. They'll live in a house together, explore and enjoy the Vegas Strip and rehearse and reminisce together.

Viewers will also be given an insight into the legends' vast and varied careers as they look back and talk about their incredible lives.

The culmination will be an hour-long special of their variety performance at a world-famous theatre in the Nevada desert. Despite decades of experience in the industry, Vegas is an eye-opener.

"I suppose the equivalent in England is Blackpool - that is the Vegas of England, but there's nothing like Vegas," Jess explains.

"We played in a beautiful theatre called the Orleans theatre. And to get there you had to go through a mile of slot machines and Kenny Lynch and I were sitting at one of the machines. Then a lady of a certain age came over and said, 'You're in my seat'.

"I said, 'I'm in your seat?' She said 'Yes, I've been sitting on that seat for 50 years'.

"And then I realised, of course, that she probably comes every day and the place was full of women of about 50 gambling on these slot machines."

Another aspect that the celebs found bizarre was being part of a reality show.

"It's a new art form, I suppose," Jess says.

"We're wired up all day, from eight in the morning to ten at night and they say, 'Be careful what you say', but if you don't say anything you don't get any viewing time.

"We were a great group and nobody fell out. It was a real happy family."

The man tasked with taking the veteran stars under his wing is legendary producer Frank Marino.

"He's the most fabulous man," Su says. "He's Mr Showbiz. He just came straight in there, looking marvellous, he had a fantastic jacket on, sparkly, and his hair if gorgeous. He's very handsome, I'd have him in my house anytime."

There was another unexpected development for the stars while they were in Vegas - the mass shooting at Mandalay Bay.

"It was really horrendous," Jess admits. "Because everyone was so devastated, we all kind of decided that the show must go on."



Last Laugh in Vegas, Tuesday, ITV, 9pm

# BEST OF THE REST

MONDAY

**Lenny Henry: The Commonwealth Kid BBC1, 9pm**

Lenny Henry was born in Dudley in the West Midlands, but prefers to describe himself as a Commonwealth kid, the son of Jamaican parents who came to the UK as part of the post-Windrush generation in 1957. As a result, he's perhaps perfectly placed to present this documentary, in which he explores the deep-rooted relationship between the crown, the Commonwealth and its 2.3 billion people. He begins by touring the Caribbean, stopping off in the Bahamas and Jamaica, where he hears what being a part of this league of nations means to ordinary people, from street vendors to teachers and students. Henry also examines the wider relationship between all of the people of the Commonwealth, and what binds them together.

TUESDAY

**The Great Celebrity Bake Off for Stand Up to Cancer Channel 4, 8pm**

Comedians Alan Carr and Aisling Bea, Paralympian Kadeena Cox, and actress Teri Hatcher compete in the final programme of culinary challenges. Judges Paul Hollywood and Prue Leith set the celebrities some tough tasks, beginning with a muffin

signature, followed by a test of their pie-making abilities for the technical, and then a showstopper cake challenge that may see dreams may turn to nightmares. These brave celebrities are all baring their bakes to raise money for Stand Up To Cancer - and to encourage viewers to do the same.

WEDNESDAY

**Commonwealth Games 2018: The Games Today BBC2, 7pm**

Highlights of the opening ceremony at Carrara Stadium in the city of Gold Coast, Queensland, Australia, as the 21st staging of the Games was officially declared open. The Games were last held in Australia at Melbourne 2006, and Gold Coast overcame Hambantota, Sri Lanka in the bidding process back in November 2011 to win the right to host this event.

At the heart of this ceremony was the traditional Parade of Nations, the Competitors' Oath and the finale of the Queen's Baton Relay.

THURSDAY

**Big Cats About the House BBC2, 8pm**

Documentary following the work

of Giles Clark at his sanctuary for big cats in Kent. Maya the jaguar is 10 weeks old and is starting to push the family to their limits as she wreaks havoc in the house, destroying the bookshelf, getting into the fridge and ripping up the sofa. However, after an appearance on breakfast TV with Giles, she becomes a big-cat ambassador. Giles also takes in a five-month-old cheetah called Willow, who is recovering from an incident where she broke her paw, and travels to Kenya to help lions in need. Last in the series.

**Not Going Out BBC1, 9pm**

Lee Mack and Sally Bretton star in the domestic comedy which sees the couple appear to go from one disaster to the next, while coping with their three kids, Lucy's disapproving parents, Lee's feckless dad Frank and their world-weary friends Toby and Anna. This week the couple become addicted to a TV boxset, causing them to cancel dinner



Commonwealth Games 2018: The Games Today, Wednesday, BBC2, 7pm

with Toby and Anna at the last moment. But when they lie about the reason, it only succeeds in opening up a huge can of worms.

FRIDAY

**Sounds Like Friday Night BBC1, 7.30pm**

New series. Greg James and Dotty for live music and interviews, direct from Television Centre in west London's White City. Synth-pop group Years and Years and rock band Snow Patrol both perform their new singles for the first time on live television, while American pop superstar Meghan Trainor also graces the show. Dotty will be heading head out and about, interviewing major stars wherever they are in the world - over the course of the series, she'll be chatting to the likes of Little Mix and Gary Barlow.

I Don't Like Mondays

**Channel 4, 8pm**

New series. Comedy game show, hosted by Alan Carr, in which everyone in the audience arrives with their resignation letter in hand and, with the help of a celebrity guest, Alan whittles participants down to the lucky chosen one via hilarious games, surprise guests, a celebrity executive board and the novel use of a filing cabinet.

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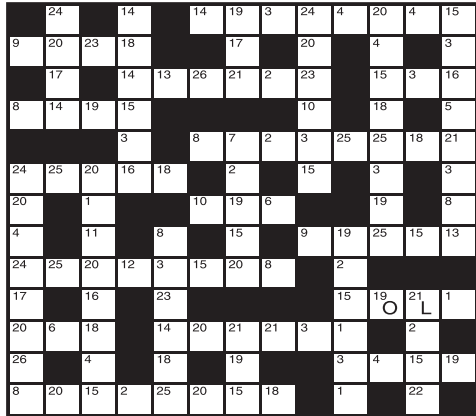


## BRAIN GYM

No.473

## Codeword

Each number in the grid represents a different letter of the alphabet and every letter of the alphabet is used. Use the given letter(s) to the right of the main grid to start you off.



LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
M	K	Z	Y	G	U	C	H	F	O	D	T	J
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
W	E	R	S	L	N	I	P	V	B	Q	X	A

## Double Crossword

Choose either quick or cryptic clues - both fit the same grid.

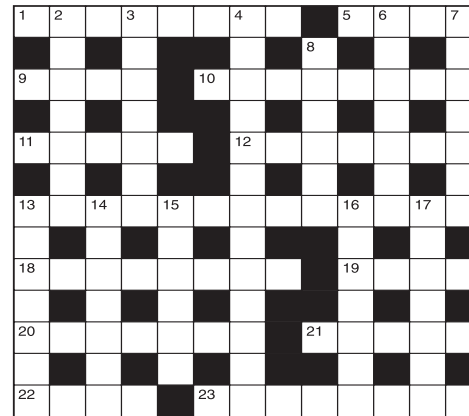
## Cryptic Clues:

## Across

- Words in action? (8)
- Bring in a number to help - sharpish! (4)
- Woeful cry from a girl, we hear (4)
- False encouragement given on debts (8)
- Dog that is scientifically famous (5)
- Accident-prone tourist? (7)
- Soldier-husbands who try to supply all one's needs (7,6)
- Accrued the sailor having found the right answer (8)
- He won't go out with his mates (4)
- Walked back around a man sleeping (7)
- Case that may be looked into (5)
- Title of pantomime? (4)
- Bearing gifts we hear, vaguely (8)

## Down

- Its meals are usually late (7)
- Don't approve but is liked somehow (7)
- I, for one! (7,6)
- Downfall of a barber? (7)
- Wastes the rewards (7)
- A model employer (6)
- Given protection, being cautious (7)
- Rum's not what the cure's made of (7)
- Put in charge again (6)
- Make watchful remarks? (7)
- Salt and ice in flexible combination (7)



## Quick Clues:

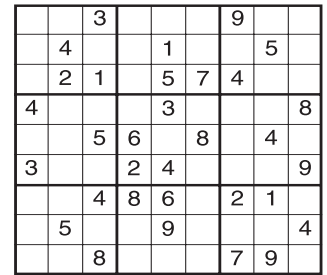
## Across

- Dusk (8)
- Sell (4)
- Region (4)
- Encumbrance (8)
- Foolish (5)
- Function (7)
- Execution order (5,8)
- Kingdom (8)
- Bucket (4)
- Ease (7)
- Exclude (5)
- Sword (4)
- Helped (8)

## Down

- Belligerent (7)
- Handbill (7)
- Somersaulting (4,4,5)
- Fetter (7)
- Reduce (7)
- Coming (6)
- Fault (7)
- Ring-like (7)
- Listen (6)
- Utter (7)
- Weather (7)

## Sudoku



Fill in the grid above so that every column, every row and each of the 3x3 boxes contains all the digits from 1 to 9.

## LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS &gt;

1	7	2	9	3	8	6	5	4
5	9	4	2	6	7	3	1	8
8	3	6	1	4	5	7	2	9
7	4	1	5	9	2	8	6	3
3	8	9	4	8	1	2	7	5
2	8	5	6	7	3	9	4	1
6	1	8	3	2	4	5	9	7
9	5	7	8	1	6	4	3	2
4	2	3	7	5	9	1	8	6

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS:  
CRYPTIC - Across: 1 Bad egg; 4 Treble; 9 Fruitless task; 10 Enlist; 11 Totem; 12 Ambit; 14 Demur; 18 Heaps; 19 Sternum; 21 Philosophical; 22 Lagged; 23 Crisis.  
Down: 1 Buffet; 2 Double meaning; 3 Gates; 5 Rosette; 6 Blast furnaces; 7 Eskimo; 8 Cease; 13 In store; 15 Chapel; 16 Estop; 17 Smalls; 20 Ether.  
QUICK - Across: 1 Remote; 4 Aplomb; 9 Disinterested; 10 Cholera; 11 Singe; 12 Acid; 14 Adder; 18 Ropes; 19 Heather; 21 Going for a song; 22 Denote; 23 Ghastly. Down: 1 Reduce; 2 Misconception; 3 Tense; 5 Pleased; 6 On tenterhooks; 7 Badger; 8 Delay; 13 In sight; 15 Frigid; 16 Throw; 17 Brogue; 20 Abash.

## Quiz

- Which artist painted the ceiling of the Banqueting House in Whitehall?
- Which golfer was noted for wearing all-black outfits?
- Which island includes New York boroughs Queens and Brooklyn?
- Who wrote A Brief History of Time, published in 1988?
- Which present-day city was the capital of the Byzantine and Ottoman Empires?

- Which organs are affected by asbestosis?
- Which author was married to Jonathan Dimbleby?
- To which country do the Stewart and Chatham Islands belong?
- Who did Steve McClaren succeed as manager of Middlesbrough football club?
- What type of animal is a capuchin?

## Last week's solutions:

Quiz: 1 Evelyn Waugh; 2 Staffa; 3 George Peppard; 4 Farthing; 5 Queen's Champion; 6 Thelonus Monk; 7 Zagreb; 8 Max Von Sydow; 9 Punjab; 10 Jeremy Paxman.  
Niner: EDUCATION

## Niner

Each number from 1 to 9 represents a different letter. Solve the clues and insert the letters in the appropriate squares to discover a word which uses all nine letters.

62873  
6284578  
215239

gives a home,  
gives another home,  
gives a home for animals.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

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# Head for the hills in Cyprus – to relax

BETWEEN shadows on the water from the overhanging boughs of mature trees, I can see glimpses of my prey, lazily swimming in the deepest stretch of the stream.

The only thing disturbing this tranquil idyll is the excited shrieking of one of my companions, who's just landed her first ever fish.

As she hauls in a glistening trout, I'm filled with admiration and a bit envious of her luck, but as I half abandon my fishing rod to take a photo of her prize, it starts to twitch and then violently shake. I try to remember my instructions and pull the line through the water before dragging a monster of a fish up to the surface triumphantly.

## TRANQUIL

A couple of hours later my prize is served up to me. It's been seasoned, simply grilled and dressed with a garlic sauce and local vegetables.

Casale Panayiotis, tucked away in a tranquil valley in the northern Troodos mountains, is a rare find – a boutique hotel that encourages guests to celebrate its past and immerse themselves in local culture.

It's the brainchild of business mogul John Papadouris, who was born and raised in the rural mountain village of Kalopanayiotis, before moving on to London and the Middle East to make his fortune in the engineering industry.

When he returned to his home country decades later, he found a sad state of affairs. The division of Cyprus following the Turkish invasion in 1974 and an exodus of adults from the remote Troodos area to work in bigger towns and cities, had left Kalopanayiotis a shell of a village. Most houses were empty and derelict, just a tiny population of elderly people remained; the village lacked even a cafe.

Rest and relaxation – take a dip in the pool



So Papadouris decided to restore Kalopanayiotis to its former glory – but with a 21st century twist. He used his own money and European funding to improve infrastructure, build paths and lighting, encourage locals to build their own businesses and, most ambitiously, create a luxury hotel integrated into the heart of the village.

There are now 43 individual rooms scattered through the hillside community and three top-notch restaurants – not to mention a world-class spa which reflects the ancient spa village's history.

Cyprus thrills – the view from Casale Panayiotis



For thousands of years, pilgrims and hunters have been drawn to the valley for the nearby sulphur springs, bathing in its healing waters. Traditionalists can opt for bath rituals like the 'Theouha', an immune-boosting soak in healing water or the 'Goat Milk and Rose Ceremony' while romantics might prefer a couple's ritual in a private treatment suite, complete with sparkling wine and fresh fruit.

Casale offers experiences for everyone from foodies to adventure seekers, and newly revitalised, I'm ready to learn the ways of traditional Cypriot life. I throw

myself into learning how to make classic Cypriot cheese halloumi and pay a visit to the nearby Tsiakkas Winery.

History is entwined with modern life in every aspect of Cypriot culture, and that becomes abundantly clear after a short stroll around Kalopanayiotis. One of the 14 villages of the mountainous Marathasa area, it's home to the Saint John Lampadistis monastery, a Unesco World Heritage site.

Casale Panayiotis is the perfect antidote to the stress and pollution of modern life. The perfect way to relax

CELIA PAUL

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## Ultimate Emmerdale

Studio, Village & Meet a Star

**Departing Saturday 19 May**  
from Cannock, Walsall & Wolverhampton

### Price Includes...

- ✓ Return coach travel
- ✓ 1 night DBB at a selected hotel, Yorkshire
- ✓ Guided tour of the Emmerdale TV Village
- ✓ Timed admission to the Emmerdale Studio Experience
- ✓ Exclusive meet and greet with Mark Charnock at the Bradford Hotel

**2 Days**  
By Coach **only £169**



## Royal Ascot

Ladies Day

**Departing Wednesday 20 Jun**  
from Brownhills, Walsall & Wolverhampton

### Price Includes...

- ✓ Return coach travel
- ✓ 1 night DBB at a selected hotel
- ✓ Admission ticket to the Windsor Enclosure at Royal Ascot on Ladies' Day
- ✓ En-route visit to Oxford

**2 Days**  
By Coach **only £159**



## Emmerdale Village

Studio Experience & Harrogate

**Departing Saturday 14 Jul**  
from Brownhills & Walsall

### Price Includes...

- ✓ Return coach travel
- ✓ 1 night DBB at a selected hotel, Yorkshire
- ✓ Timed admission to the Emmerdale Studio Experience
- ✓ Guided tour of the Emmerdale TV Village
- ✓ Free time in Leeds and Harrogate

**2 Days**  
By Coach **only £149**



## Buckingham Palace

& London

**Departing Saturday 11 Aug**  
from Cannock, Walsall & Wolverhampton

### Price Includes...

- ✓ Return coach travel
- ✓ Overnight stay at a 3 or 4-star outer London hotel with dinner and full English breakfast
- ✓ Admission ticket to Buckingham Palace State Rooms with coach transfer
- ✓ Free time in London

**2 Days**  
By Coach **only £119**

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# PROPERTY

YOUR WEEKLY  
GUIDE TO HOME  
BUYING AND  
LETTING

47

The Chronicle Thursday, March 29, 2018

## Family home with potential for development

A self-build detached house that is ideal for a family, 34 Sanstone Road, Bloxwich, is well maintained, but would benefit from some cosmetic improvements. It is for sale through Goodchilds at £275,000 with no chain.

A spokesman for the selling agent said: "There is excellent scope for further development, subject to gaining the relevant planning consent."

Briefly the home comprises an entrance hallway, a main lounge, dining room, fitted kitchen, utility area with a WC and a side garage. To the first floor are three bedrooms and a bathroom.

To the outside is a private and well maintained rear garden with a side access to the front block paved driveway. The property has gas central heating with a Vaillant combi boiler and, double glazing.

In more detail number 34 is set behind a block paved driveway and a front garden and is accessed via an entrance porch. The entrance hallway has stairs to the first floor and doors into the lounge and the kitchen. The lounge has a window to the front and a door leading into the dining room. The dining room has sliding patio doors opening to the garden and a door into the kitchen.

Having a range of units, the kitchen also has a pantry cupboard, a window overlooking the rear garden and a door to the utility area. This has a washing machine, a WC and a door opening to the rear garden and another to the garage.

Bedroom one is a good sized double with two windows to the front. Bedroom two is a second double bedroom with a window overlooking the rear garden, while bedroom three is a single, having a window to the front.

The bathroom has a bath, wash hand basin and a WC and is positioned to the rear.

The rear garden has been very well maintained and features mature hedges to the borders, a patio area and a side gate accessing the front.

BLOXWICH £275,000



### TO VIEW THIS PROPERTY

AGENT: Goodchilds

TEL: 01922 405699

EMAIL: [bloxwich@goodchilds-uk.com](mailto:bloxwich@goodchilds-uk.com)

### KEY FEATURES

Self build detached  
Ideal for a family  
Well maintained  
Development scope  
3 bedrooms



# He's sold

Turn to your local estate agent to sell your property and you will be **SOLD ON:**

- Professional accredited local agent service
- Free valuation
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If you are thinking of selling, look no further than the estate agents in these pages for the best local advice available.



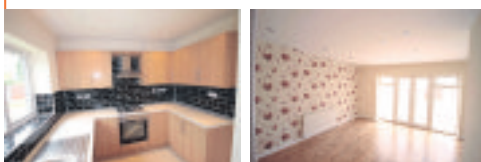
# Walsall 01922 711444

New Office Location 200 High Street, Bloxwich, Walsall, WS3 3LA

goodchilds-uk.com

**GOODCHILDS**  
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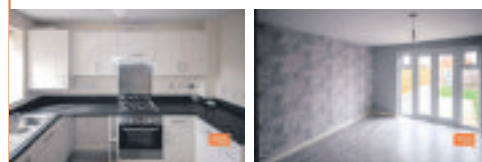
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Wood Lane, Willenhall

- Three Bedroom Townhouse
- Double Glazing
- Gas Central Heating
- Conservatory
- Downstairs w.c
- Front and Rear Gardens
- Off Road Parking
- Garage to side
- Sorry No DHSS
- EPC - 83

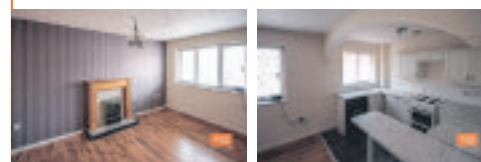
£750 PCM



Asheridge Close, Wednesfield

- Mid Terraced Property
- Two Bedroom
- Entrance Hall
- Cloakroom WC
- Kitchen
- Lounge
- Gas Central Heating
- Double Glazing
- Sorry No DHSS
- EPC - 83

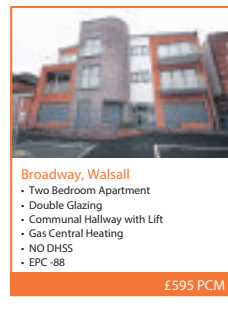
£600 PCM



Basalt Close, Walsall

- Self-Contained
- First Floor Flat
- Entrance Porch
- Lounge/Kitchen Diner
- Off Road Parking
- Shower Over Bath
- Electric Heating
- Double Glazing
- Sorry No DHSS
- EPC - 59

£450 PCM



Broadway, Walsall

- Two Bedroom Apartment
- Double Glazing
- Communal Hallway with Lift
- Gas Central Heating
- NO DHSS
- EPC - 88

£595 PCM



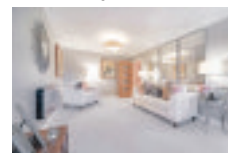
Broadway, Walsall

- One Bedroom Apartment
- Double glazing
- Gas Central Heating
- Lounge with Balcony
- Sorry No DHSS
- EPC - 88

£495 PCM



- Broadway North, Walsall
- Over 60 Retirement Apartment
  - New Build
  - Ground Floor
  - One Bedroom
  - Walk in Shower Room
  - Communal Lounge



£925 PCM



- Smiths Flour Mill, Walsall
- Two Bedroom Apartment
  - Integrated Appliances
  - En-suite
  - Allocated Parking
  - Sorry No DHSS
  - EPC - 76



£525 PCM



- Merton Way, Walsall
- Two Bedroom Top Floor Apartment
  - central heating
  - double glazing
  - Lounge
  - Fitted Kitchen
  - EPC 80



£525 PCM

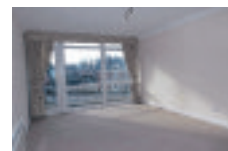


- Crown Lofts, Marsh Street, Walsall
- Studio Apartment
  - located in Walsall Town Centre
  - Access of the train station
  - benefiting from underfloor heating
  - DHSS Accepted
  - Rating: 78

£450 PCM



- Sutton Road, Walsall
- Second Floor Apartment
  - Two Double Bedrooms
  - Electric Heating
  - Large Lounge
  - Sorry No DHSS
  - EPC - 31



£525 PCM



- Elmore Green Close, Bloxwich
- One Bedroom Ground Floor Flat
  - Separate Kitchen
  - Double Glazing
  - Electric Heating
  - Sorry No DHSS
  - EPC - 51



£450 PCM



- Thornbury Road, Walsall
- ONE BEDROOM APARTMENT
  - Electric Heating
  - Double Glazing
  - Allocated Parking
  - Sorry No DHSS
  - EPC - 63



£450 PCM

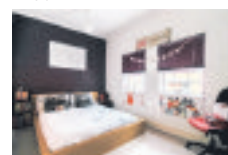


- Harrison Street, Bloxwich
- Ground upper floor Apartment
  - One Bedroom
  - Kitchen
  - Electric Heating
  - DHSS Accepted
  - Rating-7

£325 PCM



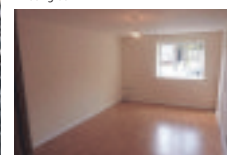
- Little Station Street, Walsall
- first floor apartment
  - lounge
  - modern kitchen
  - double bedroom
  - Sorry No DHSS
  - EPC - 54



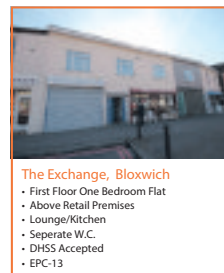
£425 PCM



- Marton Court, Bloxwich
- One & Two Bedrooms
  - Bloxwich High Street
  - Lounge
  - Fitted Kitchen
  - Communal Grounds
  - Rating-68



FROM £400 PCM



- The Exchange, Bloxwich
- First Floor One Bedroom Flat
  - Above Retail Premises
  - Lounge/Kitchen
  - Separate W.C.
  - DHSS Accepted
  - EPC-13

£325 PCM

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**WALSALL**  
JANE LANE



- Modern Semi
- Hallway, WC
- Lounge
- Refitted Kitchen
- Refitted Bathroom
- Driveway
- Gardens

**£119,950**

**NEW**

**BROWNHILLS**  
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- Canal Views To Rear
- Hallway
- Lounge/Diner
- Breakfast Kitchen
- 2 Double Bedrooms
- Shower Room
- Parking
- No Chain

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**NEW**

**BLOXWICH**  
VICTORIA AVENUE



- Popular Location
- Modern Detached
- Hallway, Lounge
- Kitchen, Dining Room
- 4 Bedrooms, En-Suite
- Private Driveway
- Garage
- Viewing Recommended

**£249,950**

**REDUCED**

**ESSINGTON**  
THE OLDE SHOP



- Extended Cottage
- Sought After Location
- Stunning Kitchen
- Lounge WC
- Dining Room
- Double Garage
- Landscaped Gardens
- Viewing Essential

**£260,000**

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# Estate House, Darwall Street, Walsall WS1 1DA

## 0121 289 3838

## Auction

Thursday 12th  
April 2018  
at 6.00pm Precisely

Banks's Stadium, Walsall  
Football Club, Bescot  
Crescent, Walsall. WS1 4SA

LOT 7

### Birmingham Road Walsall

By appointment through auctioneers



●Guide Price £240,000 PLUS

A truly substantial, late Victorian property offering spacious living accommodation, with a character and appeal seldom seen today. Occupying a most convenient situation with regular bus provision direct to Birmingham, together with ease of access on to all the regions motorways, the property will particularly suit the larger family or investment purchaser. The property has been well maintained by the current vendor, having recently installed Bathroom and Shower Room a recently refitted roof and newly installed gas boiler. The property affords gas central heating and demands viewing to appreciate the space and appeal within.

LOT 12

### Burrowes Street Walsall

3rd April 11am



Situated in a popular residential area within walking distance of the town centre this flat is just off the Walsall ring road which offers a great transport link to the M6. The property is in need of slight modernisation throughout and would ideally be suited towards an investor.

●Guide Price £59,000 PLUS

LOT 11

### Thetford Road Birmingham

By appointment through the auctioneers



●Guide Price £128,500 PLUS

A nicely presented three bedroom semi-detached home situated in a well regarded part of Great Barr. Accommodation briefly comprises lounge/diner, kitchen, three bedrooms and a bathroom.

LOT 22

### Walsingham Street Walsall

4th April 10am



●Guide Price £75,000 PLUS

This two bedroom terraced property is in need of little modernisation. The property is situated in a popular residential area within Chuckery and would make an ideal purchase for an investor.

LOT 24

### Farmstead Close Walsall

By appointment through Auctioneers



Set in a quiet cul-de-sac, this modern semi detached property offers an ideal opportunity for a first time buyer or investor who is prepared to put in a little work to tidy it up. With gas fired central heating, the property is conveniently located for all amenities and is set back from the road behind a lawned foregarden with long driveway.

●Guide Price £88,500 PLUS

LOT 1

### Teddesley Street Walsall

4th April 11am



●Guide Price £95,000 PLUS

Situated within walking distance of Walsall town centre this semi detached property is ideally located. The property is in need of modernisation throughout but holds a lot of potential for a prospective purchaser.

LOT 5

### Dalby Road Walsall

By appointment through Auctioneers



●Guide Price £85,000 PLUS

Situated in a quiet cul-de-sac, this modern semi detached property would make an ideal purchase for an investor or owner occupier. With the benefit of gas fired central heating and double glazing, the property offers potential for extension to the side.

LOT 9

### Derwent Foundry Birmingham

By appointment through Auctioneers



Situated in an extremely desirable residential area this 1 bedroom 3rd floor apartment is ideally suited towards an investor. The property requires very little modernisation and with all amenities close at hand it comprises: Accommodation Lounge (4.6m x 3.9m), Bedroom One (5m x 2.5m), Bathroom (2.2m x 1.9m), Additional Room (2.3m x 1.9m) Buyers Premium of £750.00 plus v.a.t. (£900.00 inc vat) will be charged for this lot

●Guide Price £145,000 PLUS

LOT 15

### Rosamund Street Walsall

By appointment through Auctioneers



●Guide Price £85,000 PLUS

Conveniently located in this popular residential area of Palfrey, this Victorian end terraced offers well planned and appointed living accommodation with the benefit of gas fired central heating and double glazing. Internal viewing is recommended to appreciate the accommodation.

LOT 25

### Cherry Tree Avenue Walsall

4th April 10:30am



●Guide Price £130,000 PLUS

Set in a prominent position behind a deep lawned foregarden, this traditionally styled semi detached property is situated in a highly sought after residential area and would make an ideal purchase for an owner occupier or investment. With the benefit of gas fired central heating and double glazing, the property offers well appointed, well planned and extended living accommodation. All amenities are close at hand and viewing is highly recommended.

LOT 16C

### Adelaide Street Brierley Hill

By appointment through Auctioneers



Situated within a short distance of Brierley Hill centre, this traditionally styled Victorian mid terrace property is in need of full refurbishment and a bit of TLC. An ideal opportunity for investor/builder the property offers tremendous scope for further improvement for a buyer with the intention of re-sale or for letting.

●Guide Price £60,000 PLUS

LOT 8

### Winchester Drive Birmingham

By appointment through auctioneers



This three storey terraced property is ideally located just off the M6 and M42 which offers fantastic transport links. The property is in need of slight modernisation and would ideally be suited towards an investor.

●Guide Price £95,000 PLUS

●Guides are provided as an indication of each seller's minimum expectation. They are not necessarily figures which a property will sell for and may change at any time prior to the auction. Each property will be offered subject to a Reserve (a figure below which the Auctioneer cannot sell the property during the auction) which we expect will be set within the Guide Range or no more than 10% above a single figure Guide





Paul Marrion - Partner



Kathy Marrion - Partner

www.marrion.co.uk



Energy  
Rating - D

NEW



**Woodhall House**  
Bloxwich

- Ideal retirement apartment
- Gas heated
- PVCu double glazed
- Lounge with balcony, kitchen
- 2 bedrooms, bathroom/WC
- Storage outbuilding
- NO ONWARD CHAIN
- Communal Gardens

**£74,950**

## EASTER OPENING HOURS

Good Friday - closed  
Saturday - 9am-1pm

Monday - closed  
Tuesday - open

Have a Happy Easter from all at  
**Marrion & Co**

Energy  
Rating - D

NEW



**Werneth Grove**  
Bloxwich

- Detached house
- Gas centrally heated
- PVCu double glazed
- Lounge
- Kitchen, gym
- 4 bedrooms
- bathroom/WC
- Garden, driveway

**£350,000**

Energy  
Rating - D

NEW



**Elmsdale Court**  
Birmingham Road

- Purpose Built Apartment
- Glazed and heated
- Lounge, Kitchen
- Double Bedroom
- Bathroom/WC
- Parking
- Communal Gardens
- No Onward Chain

**£60,000**

Energy Rating  
- TBC

NEW



**Norfolk Grove**  
Great Wyrley

- End Town House
- Gas Central Heating
- Double Glazing
- Lounge, Kitchen
- 2 Bedrooms, Bathroom/WC
- Garden
- Parking Spaces
- No Onward Chain

**£99,950**

Energy  
Rating - F

NEW



**Daisy Bank Close**  
Pelsall

- Extended Detached House
- Gas Central Heating
- PVCu Double Glazing
- Lounge, Dining Room/Kitchen
- Kitchen
- 3 Bedrooms
- Bathroom/WC
- Single Garage, Driveway
- Fore and Rear Gardens

**£285,000**

Energy Rating  
- TBC

NEW



**Wetherby Road**  
Turnberry

- Semi-Detached House
- Gas Central Heating
- Double Glazing
- Lounge, Dining Room
- Kitchen
- 3 Bedrooms
- Bathroom/WC, Gardens
- Garage, Driveway

**£170,000**

Energy  
Rating - D

NEW



**Kenilworth Crescent**  
Wolverhampton

- Ground Floor Maisonette
- PVCu Double Glazing
- Gas Central Heating
- 2 Bedrooms
- Bathroom
- Fore and Rear Gardens
- SORRY NO DSS, PETS OR SMOKERS
- £180 reference fee applies

**£495**

Energy  
Rating - C

NEW



**Barn Owl Drive**  
Pelsall

- Semi detached house
- Gas centrally heated & PVCu double glazed
- Guests cloaks/WC, Lounge, Kitchen/Diner
- 3 bedrooms
- Bathroom/WC
- Conservatory
- Garage & neatly presented fore
- Rear Gardens

**£180,000**

Energy  
Rating - D

NEW



**Thurstone Road**  
Bloxwich

- Detached Bungalow
- Well Presented
- Gas Central Heating, PVCu double glazing
- 2 Bedrooms, Lounge
- Fitted kitchen
- Bathroom
- Garage, Car Port Driveway
- Fore and Rear Gardens

**£224,950**

Energy  
Rating - D

NEW



**Pine Close**  
Great Wyrley

- Link detached bungalow
- Gas centrally heated
- Double glazing
- Kitchen, lounge
- 2 double bedrooms, shower room/WC
- Single car garage
- Driveway
- Gardens

**£230,000**

Energy  
Rating - D

NEW



**Blackwood Avenue**  
Wednesfield

- Available Now
- Ground Floor Apartment
- Gas Central Heating, Double Glazed
- Re-Fitted Kitchen
- Spacious Lounge
- 2 Bedrooms
- Bathroom/WC
- £180 Reference Fees Apply

**£525**

Energy  
Rating - E

NEW



**Dartmouth Avenue**  
Leamore

- Detached Family Home
- Gas Central Heating & PVCu Double Glazing
- Modern Open plan Lounge/ Kitchen/Diner
- Downstairs Cloakroom/wc
- Three Bedrooms
- Refitted Family Bathroom
- Front & Rear Gardens
- Garage. NO ONWARD CHAIN

**£190,000**

Energy Rating  
- TBC

NEW



**Pershere Road**  
Mossley

- Semi Detached House
- Potential to extend (subject to planning)
- Gas centrally heated
- PVCu double glazed
- Lounge, dining room, kitchen
- 3 bedrooms, Shower Room, WC
- Garage, driveway, garden
- NO ONWARD CHAIN

**£130,000**

Energy  
Rating - E

Energy  
Rating - C

Energy  
Rating - D

Energy Rating  
- TBC

Energy  
Rating - D



**Broad Lane**  
Bloxwich

- Victorian end town house
- Gas centrally heated
- PVCu double glazed
- 2 reception rooms, kitchen
- 2 bedrooms
- bathroom/WC
- Low maintenance garden
- Detached garage to rear

**£115,000**



**Odell Crescent**  
Bloxwich

- End terraced house
- Immaculately presented
- Gas Central Heating, Double Glazed
- Lounge
- Re-Fitted Breakfast Kitchen
- 2 Bedrooms
- Family Bathroom
- No Onward Chain

**£130,000**



**Station Place**  
Bloxwich

- End town house
- Gas centrally heated
- PVCu double glazed
- Lounge, kitchen
- conservatory
- 2 Bedrooms
- bathroom/WC
- Parking and Gardens

**£130,000**



**Lichfield Road**  
Sheffield

- End town house
- Gas centrally heated
- PVCu double glazed
- Dining kitchen, lounge
- 3 bedrooms
- shower room/WC
- Gardens and parking
- NO ONWARD CHAIN

**£130,000**



**Darlaston Road**  
Pleck

- Semi detached house
- Gas centrally heated
- PVCu double glazed
- Lounge/dining room, kitchen
- 2 bedrooms
- shower room/WC
- Workshop
- parking, gardens

**£135,000**

Energy  
Rating - B

Energy  
Rating - D

Energy  
Rating - D

Energy  
Rating - E

Energy  
Rating - D



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Rushall

- Three Storey Town House
- PVCu double glazing & Gas Central Heating
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- 3 Bedrooms, en-suite
- Family Bathroom
- Rear Garden
- NO ONWARD CHAIN
- Must Be Viewed

**£179,995**



**Selsdon Road**  
Turnberry

- Detached house
- Gas centrally heated
- PVCu double glazed
- Lounge, kitchen, conservatory
- 2 bedrooms
- shower room/WC
- Garage, carport, driveway
- Gardens

**£189,950**



**Long Lane**  
Great Wyrley

- Traditional extended semi detached House
- 4 Bedrooms, Spacious Lounge
- Dining Room, Breakfast Kitchen
- Conservatory, Utility Room
- Downstairs W.C.
- Family Bathroom, Driveway
- Small Garage Rear Garden
- No Onward Chain

**£224,950**



**Stafford Road**  
Great Wyrley

- Traditional Cottage style detached house
- Gas centrally heated
- PVCu double glazed
- 2 reception rooms
- Farmhouse kitchen
- 3 bedrooms, bathroom/WC
- Driveway, garden
- outbuildings

**£250,000**



**Stoney Lane**  
Bloxwich

- Traditional Detached House
- Large Corner Plot
- PVCu Double Glazing (w/s), Gas Central Heating
- Lounge, Dining Room, Family Room
- Fitted Kitchen, Conservatory
- 3 Bedrooms, Family Bathroom
- Large Front and Rear Gardens
- Garage

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## WILLENHALL



OIEO £180,000

### FARMHOUSE RD, WILLENHALL

Three Bedroom Detached, Lounge/ Diner, Fitted Kitchen, Utility/WC, Master With Ensuite, Family Bathroom, C/ Heating & D/ Glazing, Garage & Driveway, No Chain.

## WILLENHALL



£129,995

### ASHMORE LAKE RD, WILLENHALL

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## WILLENHALL



OIEO £120,000

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OIEO £115,000

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To the first floor there is a master bedroom with an en-suite and a further two double bedrooms, along with a family bathroom.

The property further benefits from double glazing and gas central heating.

It is located close to popular local schools, excellent transport links and a range of good local amenities.

For further information contact L&S Prestige Estates on 01902 606595.



Spacious property features an annexe

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# Cupra now manufacturer in own right

By James Parker

The new Cupra Ateca has been revealed as the first car to come from Seat's performance division since it became its own separate manufacturer.

The Cupra badge has traditionally been used for Seat's go-faster models, but it was revealed last year that it would split off as a separate brand. Its remit is to build performance versions of Seat's cars, though without any Seat badging, and to run Seat's motorsport division.

## Impressive

Its first car is the Cupra Ateca, a high-performance mid-sized SUV. Under the bonnet sits a 2.0-litre petrol engine making 296bhp, which is shared with the Seat Leon Cupra and various other Volkswagen Group vehicles such as the Golf R.

Performance is impressive for what is a large car, with the 0-60mph sprint taking 5.2 seconds and a top speed registered at 152mph.

The engine's mated to a seven-speed DSG automatic gearbox, which Cupra says has been engineered to offer quicker and smoother changes.

Power goes to all four wheels, and there are six drive modes to choose from – Cupra mode is for fast driving, improving engine response and volume, and stiffening the suspension.

On the outside, the regular Ateca has been given a mild reworking to give a sportier look, with a new body kit, black brake callipers, quad-exit exhaust and 19-inch diamond-cut



Inside Alcantara is used as a trim finish



Performance is impressive for what is a large car

alloy wheels. The new Cupra logo, which is designed to look like a tribal drawing, is present in copper at the front, back and on the wheels.

Inside, Alcantara is used on the door panels and seat upholstery, the steering wheel is covered in leather, and various trim pieces are

finished in gloss black. Copper Cupra logos are again used throughout.

Matthias Rabe, executive vice-president for research and development at Seat, said: "Cupra Ateca offers versatility like no other brand."

"It's about a unique model in its segment,



The Cupra badge has been used for Seat's go-faster models, but it was revealed last year it be a separate brand

with 296bhp, 4Drive and a new seven-speed DSG gearbox.

"It is the best example of balance between sportsmanship, fun at the wheel and ease of use in everyday life."

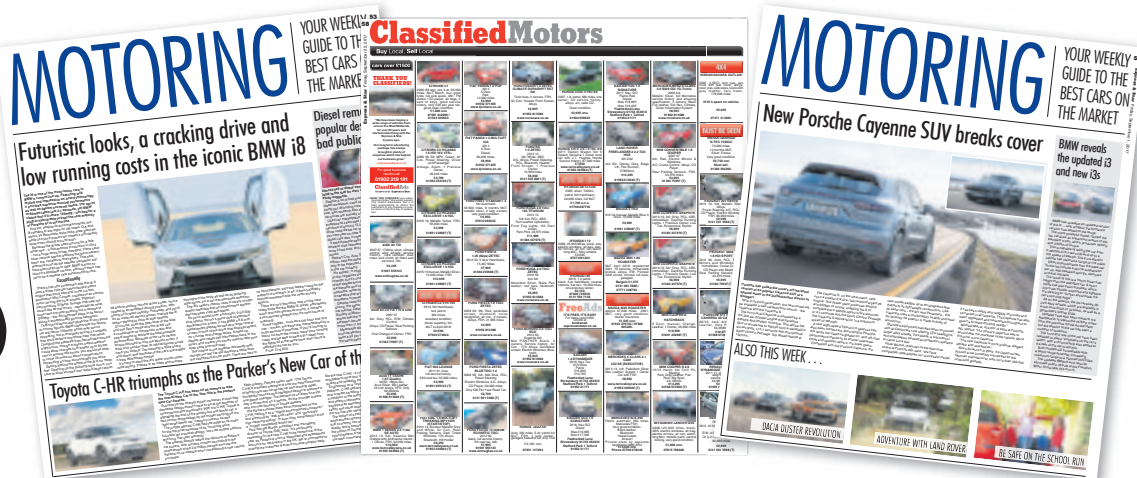
The Cupra brand has an aggressive growth strategy. At the Ateca's launch in Barcelona,

it revealed that it was working on hot versions of the Cupra hatchback and estate, and was taking over the Cupra TCR racing programme.

Cupra versions of the Ibiza and Arona are potentially in the works, as well as three as-yet unconfirmed models, which could take the range to 10 by the end of 2018.

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**6 Property**

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## Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015

**NOTICE UNDER ARTICLE 13 OF APPLICATION FOR PLANNING PERMISSION**  
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Description of proposed development  
 Two storey side and single storey rear extension.

Local Planning Authority to whom the application is being submitted is Walsall MBC at Civic Centre, Walsall WS1 1TP.

Any owner of the land or tenant who wishes to make representations about this application, should write to the council within 21 days of the date of this notice.

Signed: Mr S. Gill  
 Dated: 19/03/2018

Statement of owners' rights: The grant of planning permission does not affect owners' rights to retain or dispose of their property unless there is some provision to the contrary in an agreement or lease.

Statement of agricultural tenants' rights: The grant of planning permission for non-agricultural development may affect agricultural tenants' security of tenure.

'Owner' means a person having a freehold interest or a leasehold interest the unexpired term of which is not less than seven years.

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## Walsall Council Planning, Engineering and Transportation

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18/0212 John Dyke FOR: CHANGE OF USE TO BUDGET HOTEL INCLUDING TWO STOREY SIDE, THREE STOREY REAR EXTENSIONS AND FRONT FACING DORMER WINDOWS, PLUS EXTENSION TO EXISTING DETACHED BUILDING. AT: 129-130 LICHFIELD STREET, WALSALL, WS1 1SY

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18/0288 Mr Cooper FOR: SINGLE STOREY FRONT AND SIDE EXTENSION, AT: 1, NODDY PARK ROAD, ALDRIDGE, WALSALL, WS9 8NQ

# 10 Personals

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Walsall 99ers have signed off their first season in the D division of the YBL Mens Development League



Action against Bromsgrove Blaze. Pic: Shaun Fellows/Shine Pix

## Same school, now players are sharing same goals



Former Wolgarston schoolboy Aiden Stone

MOST schools would be pleased to produce one professional footballer from their ranks – but one Staffordshire school has produced two, both playing in the same position... and at the same Premier League club.

Former scholars at Wolgarston High School, Penkridge, Aiden Stone and Adam Legzdins are goalkeepers at Burnley.

Stone, who hails from Hednesford, is making his way in the game after being spotted playing for Brocton as a 17-year-old in Midland League Division One.

Now a year older, he is building his reputation with the Turf Moor club's under-23s – and has been given a taste of first-team involvement after being included in Sean Dyche's senior squad for the trip to Anfield earlier this season. He was also in the squad for a League Cup tie at Leeds.

Legzdins, meanwhile, has been there, seen it and done it all at the age of 31 in a career which saw him join Birmingham City 13 years ago before a series of loans to non-league clubs, followed by stints at Oldham and Crewe before joining Burton Albion, Derby County and Leyton Orient, eventually returning to Blues as a back-up keeper to Tomasz Kuszczak.

He too joined Burnley last year and the two work closely together behind their current No.1 Nick Pope, injured first choice shot-stopper Tom Heaton, as well as former Manchester United and Albion stopper Anders Lindegaard.

### Unreal

For Stone, it is still hard to describe how much his life has changed over the past 12 months. "It's been unreal," he said. "It's been intense because I've gone from training once a week and playing a game on a Saturday at Brocton to training every day."

"It is hard work but you have got to work hard if you want to be a professional and I want this to be my career."

Former Blues glovesman Legzdins was born in Penkridge and the duo attended the same school. He is tipping Stone to have a long career in the game.

"It was about 18 months ago that I first became aware of Aiden," he said. "My best friend is the head of PE at Wolgarston. He asked me to go in and put on a session for the goalkeepers so that is the first time we met."

"I could tell he had potential straight away. I then found out he had gone on to represent England schools. And then he got the move to Burnley so it's funny how things work out."

"He has developed so much as a goalkeeper in his time here."

Stone was recently living with fellow Brocton product Harry Flowers, grandson of Wolves legend Ron Flowers, who was spotted by Burnley while playing for Sheffield Hallam University. Harry recently left the Claret to join National League outfit Guiseley. Stone said: "Harry is a great lad. I think he will do really well there."

Stone now faces a huge couple of months. Out of contract in the summer, his first target is to win a new deal at Turf Moor, then gain some first-team experience by going out on loan.



Adam Legzdins while in goal for Blues

# Basketball club realising all its hoops and dreams



The 99ers' growth has been staggering

### A BASKETBALL team is jumping through hoops following a stunning year of growth.

Walsall 99ers, formed just over 12 months ago with the aim of developing the sport in the area, have been staggered by their success.

Around five people originally signed up, but now the 99ers have more than 300 players on their books from the age of five up to seniors.

A host of training sessions take place across four days at the Bloxwich Active Living Centre with the club keen to further extend their playing numbers.

Managing director Alan Caron is delighted with how the club has progressed over the past year and hopes they can continue improving and developing.

He said: "We formed about 12 months ago and we became one of the first basketball teams in the region."

"At first, there was only a few players turning up for training and games whereas now, we have over 300 people on our books – it's excellent."

### Response

"Walsall is an untapped area for basketball and the response has been fantastic."

"I consider it a massive achievement for ourselves. I think Walsall has a secret admiration for basketball, it's brilliant."

"It's now about us growing the sport further and going into schools to help promote the club and let people know we are out there."

The Walsall 99ers doesn't just feature basketball, but a range of different sports covering all ages. The club also hosts walking football, dodgeball, handball, walking basketball and wheelchair basketball which brings a community feel to the area.

The 99ers' first team and development squad both play in the same division in the Youth Basketball League. The development squad currently acts as a second team which features a host of youngsters around the age of 17, and players who have a pure love for the sport.

With two games left to play, against West Bromwich Basketball Club and Walsall Warriors II, the develop-

## SPORTING FEATURE

By Lewis Richards

**"At first, there was only a few players turning up for training and games. Now, we have over 300 people on our books."**

ment side was still in the hunt for glory, hoping to cement a play-off spot as the business end of the season draws near.

"We have a vital games coming up," said Caron. "It would be a great achievement if we managed to do get into the play-off finals."

The 99ers also have high hopes to introduce more teams across the domestic leagues, with the possibility of adding an under-19s squad to the mix go along with their already impressive youth system, which includes sides from under-11 up to under-17.

The long-term aim would be to see the under-19s move out of the academy set-up and into the first-team leagues to support both of their successful development and senior squads.

"It's been great to see over the season a number of players develop within the pathway programme," added Caron.

"The under-17s have been playing up in the senior programme and playing key roles in the games."

The club holds various training sessions at the Bloxwich Active Living Centre, High Street, Bloxwich on Monday, Wednesday and Friday evenings and also runs a Saturday club at the same venue.

Anyone wishing to join the club or attend one of the sessions should contact Alan Caron on 07879 861011.

Further details can be found on the club's website at [www.walsall99ers.com](http://www.walsall99ers.com) or on Twitter @walsall99ers.

## Setting the standard for a bright future ahead

CHAIRMAN Trevor Thomas believes Cradley Town have taken the first step on the road to a bright future after being awarded Charter Standard Status by the FA.

Seen as the first step of a five-year plan to transform the West Midlands Premier club's fortunes, it follows months of hard work by Thomas and his committee.

Future plans include a redevelopment of its Beeches View Avenue home, while continuing to grow the club's new academy.

Thomas, who has been at helm for 25 years, said: "This is massive for us, the first step in what promises to be a long journey. I'm excited about the future. I want the

club to become a trademark for success."

Central to the club's plans is the academy, which launched this season and is currently based at Tividale's Ormiston School. Thomas's long-term hope is for it to be housed at Beeches View. The immediate aim is for the academy to gain FA youth club status.

Cradley are also targeting an improvement at first-team level with Thomas hopeful they can climb 'one or two' levels. The Hammers expect to name a new permanent manager by the end of the month.

Richard Forsyth is in temporary charge until the end of the season, following Andy Wyton's resignation last month.

## City court Key for former champion's Classic return

US OPEN finalist Madison Keys will join British No.1 Johanna Konta for this year's Birmingham Classic at the Edgbaston Priory Club.

The 23-year-old American, who lost her first Grand Slam final to compatriot Sloane Stephens last year, won the Birmingham Classic tournament in 2016.

She will face stern competition to regain her crown with two-time Wimbledon champion Petra Kvitová and reigning Wimbledon champion Garbiñe Muguruza also set to compete.

Keys missed last year's tournament through injury, and is keen on making a

comeback at this year's event, which will be played from June 18-24.

"I feel like I've played some of my best tennis on grass and I have really fond memories of winning in Birmingham two years ago," said Keys.

"It was a really big result for me at the time and although a lot has happened since then, including making my first Grand Slam final last year, I took a lot from that week."

"I was really sad not to be able to play in Birmingham last year and defend that title so it makes me really happy to be able to come back and play there again."





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## Key decisions favour hosts in Darlo blow

**Newport 4 Darlaston Town (1874) 1**  
DARLASTON'S hopes of finishing in the top two suffered a severe blow with a heart-breaking loss to second placed Newport Town.

The game hinged on two major decisions, which both went Newport's way. Newport midfielder Liam Bould was lucky to get away with a card in the sixth minute for his challenge on Dave Richards, ending the Darlaston midfielder's participation. The lack of any card from referee Matthews set the scene for a feisty, yet competitive game.

Darlaston had a great chance to open the scoring on 15 minutes but Leon Taylor saw his effort blocked and within 40 seconds Newport broke and took the lead through Jamie King.

Darlaston's response was immediate and they got a deserved equaliser in the 26th minute, Sam Giles lashing home.

The visitors were denied what appeared a clear penalty when Taylor went down in the 53rd minute and the striker's protests earned him a booking.

The game remained even until Newport were awarded a spot-kick on 68 minutes for a Giles tackle on Sam Robinson. Complaints from Darlaston players that the offence was outside the area fell on deaf ears, Martin Stanton was cautioned and Jay Russell despatched the penalty.

On 71 minutes the game turned as Stanton made a heavy tackle on Simon Jackson and was sent off for a second booking. Two late goals, from Jack Davies and substitute Graham Robertson put the game to bed.

## Pics have edge over Gladiators thanks to early Brodie strike

**Rushall Olympic 1 Matlock Town 0**  
A SOLITARY Richard Brodie goal was enough to give Rushall Olympic a hard-earned victory over the Gladiators at Dales Lane.

The Pics got off to a flying start when talismanic striker Brodie put the home ahead after five minutes in this Evo-Stik premier encounter.

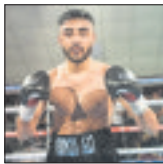
Matlock's first crack at goal came on 10 minutes, when a ball in from the right was met by the head of Ricardo German whose effort was easily held by Joe Slinn. Joe Hull could have doubled the lead on 22 minutes but his effort, from a Josh Webb free-kick, went wide.

Matlock squandered a decent chance on 52 minutes when Kieran Wallace sliced wide from a good position.

There was another chance for the visitors on 65 minutes, when Marshall Will-lock got on the end of a free-kick down the right but his effort went harmlessly wide of the left hand post.

Webb made a superb block to preserve the lead with four minutes to go, and in the 89th minute, there was a chance for Rushall but, with the goal at his mercy, Andre Landell shot agonisingly wide.

## Ali's in home corner on Venue bill



Humza Ali

HUMZA Ali hopes to show 11 months haven't gone to waste when he's back in action at the Venue in Dudley next month.

Fight night has been scheduled for Saturday April 7 with Ali, Midlands champion Tyler Denny, Kane Baker, Les Byfield, Ryan 'Stewart' Davies and Danny Ball all occupying the home corner.

Walsall's Ali laces on the pro gloves for the second time after his debut on March 5 last year, outpointing Anwar Alfadli by

whitewash in the Stadium Suite at the Banks's Stadium. Ali has since turned 22, appropriately enough on Boxing Day, and has an amateur grounding that saw him represent Aston Boxing Club for 40 bouts, with 21 wins.

Another four-round featherweight contest awaits him at the Venue, after initially being due to compete at Walsall Town Hall earlier this month.

Ali said: "I've been in training for about

14 weeks, as my fight was postponed, so it's been a long camp and I'm more than ready to get in there now. It's just under a year since I made my debut. I'm prepared for anything and I'll adapt to what's put in front of me."

Tickets, priced at £35 or £50 ringside with waitress service are available by calling 07976 283 157 or from Ali directly on 07943 400 371. Alternatively, contact him on Facebook.

## Three boxers take belts but blood is shed

BLOODSHED cut short the final bout of Saturday night as three new champions were crowned on BCB Promotions' big show at Genting Arena in Birmingham.

Wolverhampton's Kyle Williams and Brummies Andrew Robinson and Kash Ali all had belts strapped to their waists. But there would be no winner declared between Shropshire's Craig Morris and Andy Keates, from Leek in Staffordshire, which ended a technical draw.

Morris, defending his IBO Continental welterweight title, was cut by the right eye in an accidental third round clash of heads. The ringside doctor ruled the wound so severe for him not to continue.

Williams, aged 26, of Whitmore Reans, made co-challenger Jordan Turner quit at the end of the seventh to become Midlands bantamweight boss.

Robinson hadn't lost with any of the judges when the scores were tallied after his 10-rounder with Nicky Jenman for the IBO Continental middleweight title.

A peach of a second round punch rocked Sheffield veteran Dave Howe and saw Ali take the Central heavyweight title while West Bromwich's Tommy Loach and Brierley Hill based MJ Hall recorded a draw over four rounds.

There were four-round points successes for Coseley's Tommy Ghent at welter over Lithuanian Arvydas Trizno; for Oldbury cruiser Matt Sen against debutant Kevin Williams; for Brummie Mussab Abubakar at super welter at the expense of Paul Cummings and Shakan Pitters, at cruiser, who beat Elvis Dube.

# HOSTS CLAIM DERBY SUCCESS

Walsall 35 Veseyans 22

## TWO very committed teams clashed in a Midlands League West local derby.

A good size crowd were treated to an enjoyable game of rugby in the spring sunshine.

The hosts showed their intent straight from the kick off and winger Nico Watkins squeezed over for a try near the corner flag. Veseyans, however, hit back within eight minutes as scrum half Slattery went over and Baldock converted.

It wasn't long before Weston put Walsall back in the lead with a 25m penalty. The next score was another Weston penalty kick.

The Walsall lead did not last long, as lock forward Mitchell secured a touchdown. Walsall led 14-12 at half-time thanks to another Weston penalty from 25 metres.

The second period saw the Delves Road team on the attack from the very first whistle, leading to a try from JB Lucak, converted by Weston.

Into the final quarter Walsall regained control and Australian Jordan McColl made an effective finish from 20m with Weston again adding the conversion. A second try from Lucak followed. Weston converted from near the touchline.

Veseyans to their credit continued to try and press forward and were rewarded as prop forward Hateley broke through for a try. Almost immediately, the visitors benefited from a rather dubious scrum violation, and after a quickly taken penalty prop forward Booth crashed over for a deserved bonus point try.

The United were involved in a rather bizarre game with Veseyans 2nd XV. The Walsall team suffered yellow cards and injuries and conceded a late score to lose 38-36. Tony Lay scored a hat-trick of tries with one each for Richard Clark, Louis Vale and Andy Richardson with James Quigley kicking three conversions.

Favourites Wolverhampton edged out Walsall in the semi final of the Staffordshire Under-15 plate, a late score giving them a 26-17 win. Corey Blackwood scored two tries, one for Nick Ntruhungwa and a Billy Mills conversion.

## Alice beams at bronze medal



Alice Kinsella, aged 17, during her bronze medal-winning routine

THE sister of Walsall FC player Liam Kinsella bagged a bronze medal at the gymnastics world cup. In front of a full house in her home city of Birmingham, Alice Kinsella, 17, scored a total of 53.099 after going through all four pieces of apparatus cleanly.

Kinsella, a member of Park Wrekin Gymnastics Club in Telford, said: "I was just hoping to get the experience for the Commonwealth

Games but to come and get a medal; I don't know what to say really. The crowd was amazing. They helped me through all of my routines, especially on floor. The experiences I've had over the last year or so helped me to come out and do my best and get the medal."

She and brother Liam, aged 22, are children of former Walsall, Villa and Albion and Republic of Ireland midfielder Mark Kinsella

## Pursuit of boss no Gamble for Saddlers

CHIEF executive Stefan Gamble believes Walsall's pursuit of Dean Keates shows the club's faith in the new boss.

Keates was appointed after the board agreed to pay compensation to Wrexham. And Gamble feels it was important the Saddlers went out to secure their number one target rather than simply waiting to see who applied.

Keates, meanwhile, is taking inspiration from a trio of promotion-winning ex-bosses. The 39-year-old won three promotions with Saddlers as a player and has vowed to tap into the experience he gained playing under Chris Nicholl, Ray Graydon and Richard Money.

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## GRAYSHHELLS TRAVEL

..... Daytrips and Holidays .....



For all our day trips please call or go to the website for details

Tel: 01543 466370 Email: grayshells@live.co.uk www.grayshellstravel.co.uk

Coaches available for private hire Call for details

Sunday 15th April to Saturday 21st April  
The Royal Norfolk Hotel, Bognor Regis  
(7 Days) £279.00 per person

Monday 18th June to Saturday 23rd June  
Shanklin Beach Hotel, Isle of Wight  
Single Supplement £5.00 per night  
(6 days) £285.00 per person

Monday 13th August to Friday 17th August  
The Smith Court Hotel, Margate  
Single Supplement £5.00 per night  
(5 days) £270.00 per person

Monday 17th September to Friday 21st September  
St Ives Hotel, Lytham, St Annes  
(5 days) £255.00 per person

Sunday 14th October to Friday 19th October  
The Kilbirnie Hotel, Newquay, Cornwall  
Single Supplement £5.00 per night  
(6 days) £320.00 per person

Monday 26th November to Friday 30th November  
The Osborne Hotel, Ilfracombe  
(5 days) Turkey & Tinsel  
£230.00 per person

Sunday 9th December to Friday 14th December  
The Tower House Hotel, Bournemouth  
(6 Days) Turkey & Tinsel £260.00 per person

## FORTH COMING DAY TRIPS

Thursday 29th March Richmond Poppy Factory with lunch £20

Tuesday 24th April Bristol £16

Sunday 6th May Llandudno Victorian Extravaganza £16

Tuesday 5th June Morton in the Marsh Market & Bourton on the Water £16

Friday 29th June Worcester & Webbs of Wychbold £16

Tuesday 3rd July Llangollen £16

Wednesday 11th July Windsor £16

Thursday 26th July Scenic tour around Yorkshire Dales £16



## Your GPs, here for you this Easter



Walsall

Clinical Commissioning Group

This Easter NHS Walsall Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) has extra GP appointments available during the evenings and weekends, as well as the bank holidays.

If you find it difficult to attend an appointment during the working day then an extended access appointment could be for you.

The extra GP appointments will be available at Darlaston Health Centre, Pinfold Health Centre and Broadway Medical Practice during the following times:

- 6.30pm – 9pm weekdays
- 10am – 3pm weekends
- 11am – 1pm Bank Holidays  
(including Good Friday and Easter Monday)

Patients will only be seen if they have booked an appointment by calling 01922 501999.

From April 3, 2018 there will be some changes to this service, visit [www.walsallccg.nhs.uk](http://www.walsallccg.nhs.uk) for more information or speak to your practice team.







# Your pharmacy team can help you with minor health concerns

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We're healthcare experts who can give you clinical advice, right there and then.

And if symptoms suggest it's more serious, we'll ensure you get the help you need.

We're here to help you and your family stay well.

**STAYWELL**

[nhs.uk/staywellpharmacy](https://nhs.uk/staywellpharmacy)

Kristi Anderson, Pharmacy Technician





# Pharmacy opening times this easter



PHARMACY	GOOD FRIDAY (March 30) OPENING TIMES	EASTER SUNDAY (April 01) OPENING TIMES	EASTER MONDAY (April 02) OPENING TIMES
A Karim's Chuckery Pharmacy 7-9 Kinnery Street	Closed	9.00am-12.00pm	Closed
Asda Pharmacy Woodall Street	9.00am-6.00pm	Closed	9.00am-6.00pm
Asda Pharmacy St Lawrence Way	9.00am-6.00pm	Closed	9.00am-9.00am
Asda Pharmacy 42 George Street	9.00am-6.00pm	Closed	9.00am-6.00pm
B.D.S. Pharmacy Unit 11	9.00am-1.00pm, 2.15pm-5.30pm	Closed	3.00pm-6.00pm
Boots Pharmacy 3 Stafford Street	9.00am-2.00pm, 3.00pm-5.30pm	Closed	Closed
Boots Pharmacy Unit A	8.45am-5.45pm	Closed	10.30am-4.30pm
Coalpool Pharmacy 140 Dartmouth Avenue	Closed	12.00pm-1500	Closed
Lazy Hill Pharmac 159 Walsall Wood Road	Closed	3.00pm-6.00pm	Closed
Lloyds Pharmac Reedswood Way	8.00am-10.00pm	Closed	9.00am-7.00pm
Morrisons Pharmacy 125 Lichfield Street	10.00am-4.00pm	Closed	10.00am-4.00pm
Morrisons Pharmacy Wm. Morrison Superstore	10.00am-4.00pm	Closed	10.00am-4.00pm
Mossley Chemis 10 Cresswell Crescent	Closed	Closed	12.00pm-3.00pm
Pharmacy Dept. at Tesco Willenhall Tesco Stores Ltd.	6.30am-10.30pm	Closed	9.00am-6.00pm
Pleck Pharmacy 246A Wednesbury Road	Closed	6.00pm-9.00pm	Closed
Tesco Instore Pharmacy Littleton Street West	6.30am-4.00pm, 4.30pm-10.30pm	Closed	9.00am-12.00pm, 12.30pm-6.00pm
Tesco Pharmacy Silver Street	8.00am-10.00pm	Closed	9.00am-6.00pm

For more information about health services in Walsall  
visit [www.walsallccg.nhs.uk](http://www.walsallccg.nhs.uk)

## Self-Care



Cough? Cold? Sore throat? A well stocked medicine cabinet can help.

## Your Local Pharmacy



Need to stock up medicines? Use your local pharmacy.

## Your GP



Illness or injury that won't go away? Visit your GP.

## NHS 111



Need medical advice quickly? NHS 111 is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

## Urgent Care Centre



Need urgent care for an injury or illness that's not life threatening? No appointment needed.

## A&E and 999



Difficulty breathing? Heavy bleeding? Broken bones? Chest pain?



# Worried you have an urgent medical concern? CALL 111

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Our fully trained advisors will help you get the right medical attention when you urgently need it, 24 hours a day, and can put you through to healthcare professionals.



NHS 111 is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Calls are free from landline and mobile phones.

